

AN INTRODUCTION TO  
INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY

WILLIAM STALLARD

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AN INTRODUCTION TO  
INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY



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# An Introduction to Individual Psychology

*A Practical Study of the Nature  
and Sources of Mental Energy*

by

*ALICE RAVEN*

*Author of "Motive Forces of the Mind," etc.*

La nature est juste envers les hommes :  
elle les recompense de leurs peines.

—Montesquieu

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WITH GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS TO  
Dr. S. M. SLOAN,  
*Psycho-Analyst*

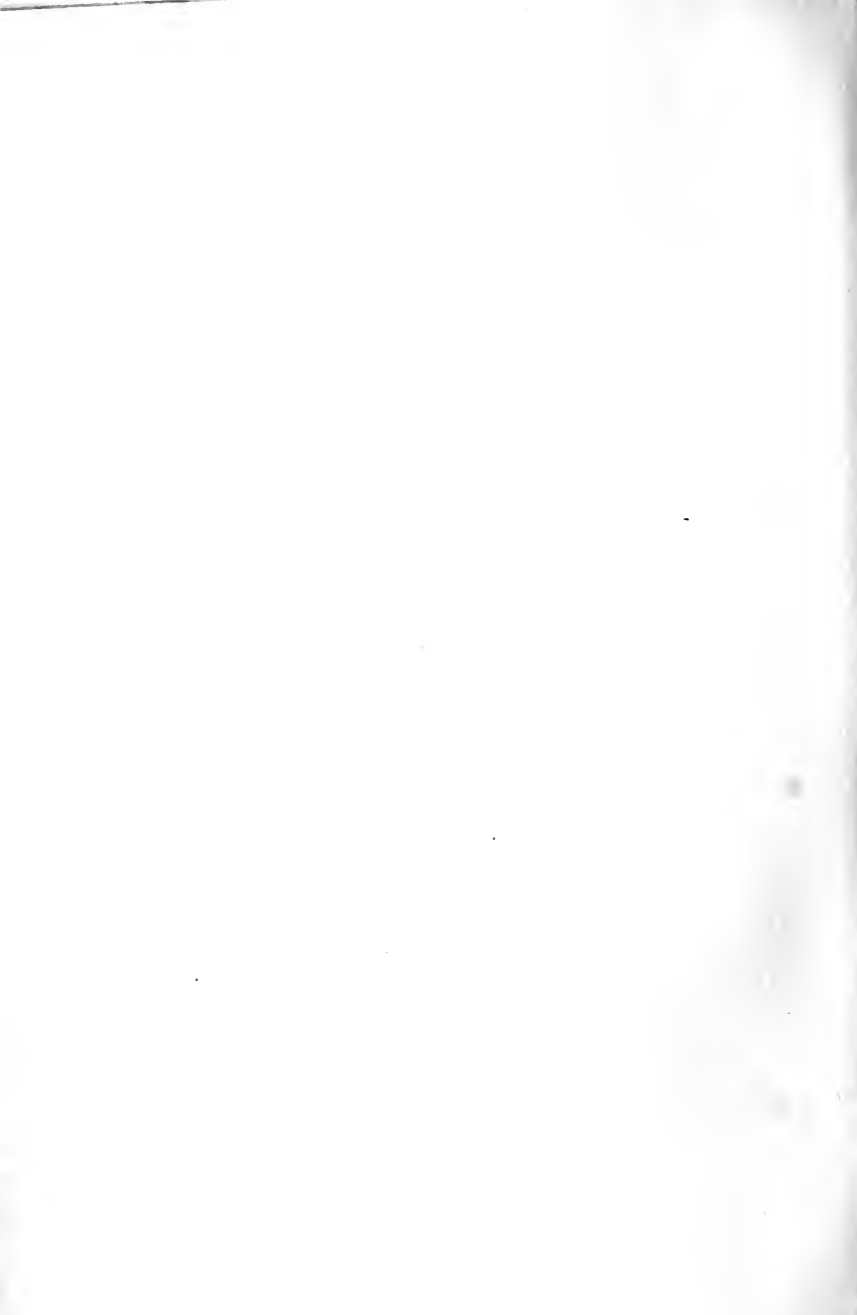
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## Preface

THE title of this book originated from the suggestion of a friend, who expressed to me the wish that there were more sources available for the study of "Individual Psychology," as opposed to the type of "Social Psychology" usually taught at college.

In this book I have attempted to analyse the human mind from the dynamic standpoint. I have shewn what are the sources of human energy and indicated how it is possible for that energy to be liberated to the fullest extent. I have also examined those processes of the mind by which human energy becomes tied up and rendered unavailable for the constructive purposes of life or the achievement of success.

As a background to other psychological conceptions and theories, I have, moreover, tried to keep before the mind of the reader the idea of a positive and courageous attitude towards life. Both the possibility and the necessity of such an attitude are deduced from a scientific study of the human mind. Further, it is only through a psychological reading of the powers of the mind and of the course of evolution in the past that success and progress can be assured for individuals and for society (which is composed of individuals) in the future.





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## CHAPTER I

### THE INSTINCTIVE BASIS OF THE MIND

#### I. INSTINCTS AND PRIMARY EMOTIONS

THE importance and interest of what is called the New Psychology lies in the view which psychologists now take of the mind, conceiving of the mind in a dynamic sense, as the seat of forces which are always operating and driving the individual on to action. The New Psychology aims not so much at a description of the faculties of the mind as at a fathoming of the sources of energy in the mind. According to the New Psychology this energy is the animating force behind all the faculties of the mind, expressing itself alternately as perception, reasoning, imagination and memory. The practical purpose of psychology is to discover and map out the sources of energy and to relate these to the stimuli which will call the energy into full activity.

From Professor McDougall we have learned the conception of man as a striving, purposive being. We can thus see ourselves as human beings always striving towards an end: we might even say that apart from a knowledge of biology and psychology we should be driven towards an end, which we should pursue without being conscious of our goal, even imagining that we were pursuing quite other ends. But each one of us, whether conscious of it or not, is pursuing a life purpose which animates

all our thoughts and actions and gives us the energy for achievement.

This life purpose may be found in all nature down to the lowest organism. The life purpose is the animating desire of each living organism to express to the full the powers with which it is endowed and live to the uttermost of its own life impulse. The life purpose, as thus realised by imagination, is seen to give rise, throughout the whole range of living beings, to three main types of activity: first, that which will preserve the organism in life; secondly, that which will enable it to exercise its powers for the reproduction of life; thirdly, that which will lead directly to the improvement of the individual life and indirectly to the improvement of the race life, which is handed on through the individual. These three activities cannot be altogether separated, for they bear closely on one another; but we shall find when we come to consider the instincts in detail that certain individual instincts seem to be related particularly to each of these types of activity.

The instincts are those native dispositions in the organism, animal or human, which enable it to respond to its environment in such a way as to achieve its life purpose. Gradually through the ages of evolution, certain arrangements and associations of nerve cells have taken place, assuring a concentration of nervous energy under any circumstances which have an importance for the organism in relation to its life purpose. A stimulus in the environment sets free this nervous energy, which flows along the definite path of the instinctive disposition,

towards a definite end, such as is implied in the life impulse.

The instincts are thus inherited, racial dispositions, leading to activity of a definite type suited to the situation provided by the environment. In the lowest forms of living being we can trace these instinctive activities displaying themselves in a rudimentary way. As we go higher in the scale of life, we find a more complete instinctive organisation in the animal mind and at the same time a more intelligent response to the circumstances of the environment. When we come to the higher animals we can trace quite clearly the working of this instinctive organisation, adapted to the needs of their existence; whilst in man we find the same instincts at work, supplying the driving force for the activities of human life, but controlled in relation to a conscious goal, which the human being is able to set before himself through his knowledge of himself and of the universe.

An instinct implies a threefold mental process, or the instinct itself may be called a mental process with a three-fold aspect. In psychology, it must be noted, we are dealing specifically with mental processes; so that although we recognise that physical changes accompany all mental activity, we have to leave the analysis of physical processes to physiologists, concerning ourselves only with the examination of mental happenings or processes. As a mental process an instinct implies, first, cognition: that is, the perception and recognition by the individual of some object in the environment which has a meaning

or value for him, this object providing the stimulus to the instinctive disposition; secondly, affect: or the emotion aroused by the object in the mind of the individual, according to the meaning which the object has for him; thirdly, conation: that is, the striving or set of the individual's will towards the appropriate goal of action which the recognition of the object calls for. The mental energy released along these lines discharges itself in physical or motor activity, the volume or force of this activity being in proportion to the intensity of the emotion aroused by the stimulus.

Returning to our conception of the life purpose as the great urge or drive which is behind all the instinctive activity and to which the instincts owe all their potential energy, we see that this unconscious striving of the individual for self-expression remains latent, without possibility of fulfilment, apart from such a relation with other individuals as will call out these powers and stimulate them to the full. In the reproduction of life we see that two individuals are necessarily concerned for the purpose, and this union of the sexes remains the type of all such fruitful union and co-operation between individuals as makes it possible for each single individual to attain full self-realisation and to become truly creative. The instincts provide the natural type of response of the individual in the presence of other individuals as well as <sup>in</sup> the presence of the inanimate forces of Nature; for by instinct the individual rightly perceives and reacts to those objects which will stimulate his powers to the full. Rooted in the



unconscious, instincts represent the wisdom of the ages. Through the aeons of evolution the universal life-force or psyche has been at work forming these native dispositions by which man responds to his environment in such a way as to ensure his own progress and the progress of the race.

Taking the instincts in detail, according to the enumeration of instincts given by Professor McDougall in his *Social Psychology*,<sup>1</sup> we shall find that we can relate these to the three types of activity which we saw were implied in the life impulse of the human being, the urge to the preservation of life, the urge to the reproduction of life and the urge to the improvement of life. In each true instinctive reaction we shall trace the threefold mental process: the recognition of a definite object which forms the stimulus to the instinct, a definite emotional response to that object, and a mental "set" or striving towards some definite action with regard to that object. The emotion thus roused, being of a simple, definite nature, is called a "primary emotion." The intensity of the emotion measures the force which is afterwards expended in action.

Related distinctly to the preservation of life are the four instincts of flight, pugnacity, repulsion and curiosity. The instinct of flight is marked by the definite emotion of fear. This instinct is aroused by the perception of an object which is dangerous to the life or which threatens the freedom of the individual and which is too strong for the individual

<sup>1</sup> W. McDougall, *An Introduction to Social Psychology* (1923), Chapter III.

to offer any resistance to it. Under these circumstances the chief means of safety is flight, the emotion of fear lending that unwonted energy to the fleeing animal or human being which ensures the preservation of its life. The fear-flight instinct is thus an organisation of energy, partly physical, partly mental, which from being potential, becomes actual in response to the stimulus, whether that be an enraged bull or an avalanche or any other object which cannot be successfully tackled in flight. A second possible type of reaction under the same circumstances is that of concealment, when all the energy is concentrated on a complete immobility, whilst all the outward signs of fear such as facilitate escape by flight (e.g. the rapid beating of the heart and hurried breathing) are suppressed. In either type of reaction we see how the emotion of fear supplies the energy for a definite course of action, towards which the whole mental constitution for the moment is set in order to preserve the safety of the individual.

The second instinct directed towards self-preservation is that of pugnacity, with its distinctive emotion of anger. This instinct is awakened primarily by any threat to the life or safety of the individual; also by interference with the course of any instinctive activity. The anger felt in relation to the person who offers such threat or interference passes over into energy directed to the destruction of that person. Anger is the specific emotion aroused by an "enemy," that is by someone outside the individual's own "herd," in relation to whom the man

or woman feels none of the compunction at inflicting harm which they would feel in doing an injury to one of their own kin or "herd." In ignorant minds the instinct of pugnacity may be aroused simply by the sight of a stranger, and may be expressed by the unfriendly bark of a dog that is kept by the human being to show the feeling which he himself is ashamed to show openly.

The instinct of repulsion, with the emotion of disgust, is obviously directed towards ensuring the safety of the individual. This instinct provides a type of response to objects which have certain definite characteristics. Primarily it is aroused by objects with a (literally) unpleasant taste or which are slimy or slippery to the touch. The feeling of disgust aroused by these objects, leading to action for their removal or for the avoidance of them on the part of the animal or human being, must have often served in the past to save the individual from the danger of poison and of snakes, which was constantly present in primitive life. The emotion of disgust may also lead to the avoidance of objects which from their moral or social nature are at once unpleasant and dangerous. The "dropping" of an unpleasant subject shows a similar emotional reaction.

The instinct of curiosity, with the emotion of wonder, is the natural response to an object strange or startling in its character. The feeling of wonder aroused by such an object produces in the individual the desire to approach and examine it, in order to discover if its properties are useful or harmful to

life. This instinct is directed towards the improvement of life as well as towards its preservation, for the emotion of wonder often leads to long and sustained effort in a human being endowed with keen perceptive powers to understand the nature of new or unknown objects and to master the laws which govern them. Through this zest for discovery he gains knowledge which can be utilised for the purposes of human progress.

The four instincts which we have considered are to some extent negative in character. They are mainly directed to self-preservation, a necessary but not a constructive end, and are the reactions in the face of an unfriendly or a mistrusted world. At the same time it is in these instinctive reactions to a hostile stimulus that the powers of the individual are called out in an exceptional way. To meet a danger the human being will show marvellous powers of mental ingenuity as well as greatly increased physical powers. Apart from the necessity of dealing with enemies, which marked the earlier stages of human evolution, these powers of body and mind (which are still available as reserve energy in the face of exceptional difficulties) might have remained latent and unknown.

The instinct of sex is manifestly directed towards the reproduction of life. We cannot name any simple, definite emotion as pertaining to this instinct, but we may say that the perception or recognition of the sex object is accompanied by a longing or passion which furnishes the energy by which the instinct is carried on to completion.

From the psychological point of view we have to observe that the stimulus supplied by the suitable sex object not only releases the reproductive powers of the body but also the highest powers of the mind. As to the nature of a "suitable" sex object, we find that in every class or rank of living organism, the universal law is for the individual to mate with one of its own "kind." Within the rank of human beings we have to notice, further, the existence of "herds" within "herds," of organised divisions, such as nation, clan, and social class. It is interesting to observe that the instinct of sex may overleap these narrower boundaries of tribe and class. A member of an "enemy herd" is no longer looked upon as an "enemy" if that individual forms a "suitable" sex object; the "enemy herd" itself may even be adopted as "fatherland" by the suitor of the sex object.<sup>1</sup> The instinct of sex, therefore, sometimes operates to abolish barriers between different classes and "herds" in human beings.

The parental instinct, characterised by the definite emotion of "tender feeling," is related primarily to the reproduction of life. We cannot consider either the sex instinct or the parental instinct, however, without seeing that in the drive towards the reproduction of life that animates both these instincts, there is also an unconscious desire for the improvement of life. The parent desires "better

<sup>1</sup> A good example of this is furnished by Gogol's romance of Cossack life, *Taras Bulba*, in the love of the hero's son for a Polish woman, with whose nation the Cossacks were at deadly war.

things" for the child and strives to give the child the "best chance" possible.

The "tender feeling" which characterises this instinct lends energy to a definite impulse, that of cherishing the young, nourishing and protecting them. The reaction is primarily produced by the presence of the parent's own young; only gradually in the course of civilisation has parental feeling come to be drawn out by the sight of any child, weak and helpless, or by the sight of any human being (or even animal) in distress. This instinctive reaction is also more characteristic of the mother than the father, owing to the closer relation of the child to the mother than to the father and to its more absolute dependence on the care of the mother. With the progress of civilisation, however, the "tender emotion" is becoming more markedly characteristic of men as parents than in earlier times, when the call of the camp was stronger than the call of the home.

The gregarious instinct or herd instinct is the response of the individual to the presence of one or more of his own "kind," be it of his kin, of his tribe, of his nation, of his social class, or (in modern life) of his church or university or profession. There is always some sign by which a man recognises the member of his "herd," and, although we cannot give any definite name to the emotion which possesses him at the sight of his fellow, there is doubtless always a heightening of self-feeling of a pleasant nature, whilst energy is released for co-operation with the other herd member or members for a common end.

Within his herd a man feels secure. All those who are within the herd he looks on as "friends," the objects to a certain degree of "tender feeling"; all without are enemies to whom no obligation is due.

The herd is designed for mutual help and support. In co-operation with the herd the individual (animal or human) obtains safety and also secures far greater opportunities for satisfying the needs of his existence than he would do alone. In the animal world birds flock together when they wish to find breeding grounds or when they are driven to seek new territories from hunger. In the herd (animal or human) those who are wisest or most experienced naturally become the leaders and the rest obtain the advantage of the superior power or knowledge of those recognised as "chiefs." Towards the leaders the members of the herd show implicit obedience, because this is necessary for that united, organised herd action by which the individual will gain the ends which would be impossible for him outside the "herd." We may say that the herd organisation is mainly for the *improvement* of life (although it also provides the conditions for the preservation and reproduction of life). The stimulus to the powers of the individual when he is called upon to take action with the herd for the good of himself and of the community is tremendously strong, as is particularly evidenced in times of common danger. The individual catches the emotions of the rest of the herd, the leader of the herd being responsible for giving the right (or wrong)

tone to those emotions, and finds himself possessed of a correspondingly increased volume of energy.

The next two instincts which we shall consider are related particularly to the improvement of life. The first is the instinct of self-assertion or self-display, with the characteristic emotion of positive self-feeling or elation. This instinct is closely connected both with the sex and parental instincts, which as we saw had a bearing on the improvement of life as well as on the reproduction of life. The instinct of self-assertion, with the impulse towards the display of the individual's powers, is called out primarily by a sex object. In the animal world we think of the peacock "displaying" its tail for the admiration of the female bird. The instinctive reaction in the presence of the other sex is evidently a display of beauty or of power, unconsciously designed to show the individual's capacity for sexual mating and the reproduction of life. This implies that the new life is to be born in beauty, to be a "better" one than the old. In the higher scale of human life, the stimulus will be, not only to the display of physical power or beauty, but to the higher qualities of personality and character: to courage, to intellect, to artistic capacity, and all that is valuable for the exigencies of life. The energy of positive self-feeling, aroused by admiration, leads the individual to such expression of his powers as would be impossible otherwise. Not only the admiration of the other sex, but the admiration which the parent receives from the child,



or the admiration which friend receives from friend, stimulates the positive emotion and thus calls into play, along the lines of this instinct, the latent powers of the individual.

The instinct of subjection or self-abasement, with its emotion of negative self-feeling, is the instinct which balances the instinct of self-display. This instinct comes into play when the individual is in the presence of someone who is his superior in wisdom or knowledge or some other desired quality. He then naturally takes the inferior attitude, in order to obtain the advantage of the other's superior qualities. The attitude of subjection is primarily characteristic of the child towards the parent, on whose superior strength and knowledge the child is dependent for the needs of his existence. In the sex relationship this instinct naturally balances the instinct of self-display, since there must be the tendency to admire, as well as the tendency to seek admiration, in each of the sexual partners desiring co-operation with the other. In the herd relationships, also, there must be a balancing play of these two instincts. For a satisfactory herd adjustment there must be the willingness to submit to the opinion of others, the power of "giving and taking," without which the individual cannot obtain the advantage of corporate herd action. The emotion of negative self-feeling, which implies the acknowledgment of a "superior," also gives energy for service and for the pleasant expression of admiration. In every herd contact, one of these two emotions will be evoked; if only two

members of a "herd" are together, one naturally acts as leader, the other as subordinate.

Two other innate dispositions are included by McDougall in his list of instincts, because, although not marked by an emotion of a definite character, they form perfectly definite impulses towards action of a particular kind, whilst the knowledge contained in these impulses appears to be apart from experience and to be thus an instinctive and racial inheritance. The first of these two is the instinct of construction. In animals we see this instinct demonstrated most clearly in the bird, which apart from previous experience and urged by a *mental* stimulus (since the young for whom the parent birds are providing have not yet come into existence) makes such a perfect object as a nest, appearing to know by intuition the laws of its construction. This instinct is closely connected with the parental instinct, a fact which suggests that the energy of the instinct may be derived from the "tender emotion" of the parent directed towards the preservation of its young. In human beings, too, we cannot separate the constructive instinct from the parental instinct, the first urge to construction being no doubt derived from the desire to build a shelter for the "family."

The second of the two instincts is the instinct of acquisition. The hoarding of precious objects has partly perhaps a sexual significance, the idea of adornment entering into the impulse towards the collection of anything shining or beautiful. In the shrine, too, we see how a tribute may be paid to a religious object by the gift of beautiful or valuable

offerings. The hoarding of food, on the other hand, has a close connection with the parental function. Of the instinct of acquisition we may say generally that the impulse towards the collection and hoarding of precious objects seems to be inborn in the human being and to be directed towards increasing his feeling of worth and security. It is, therefore, closely connected with the instinct of self display.

In these instincts or innate dispositions of the human being we have the elements out of which the individual personality and character are built up. They give us, as it were, ready made, certain tendencies, inborn in each individual, by virtue of which the individual perceives and judges, experiences emotion and exercises determination and will. These instincts are common to all human beings, each individual being bound by his very nature to react in certain ways to certain situations. These definite forms of reaction provide the path by which the psychic energy flows out for the accomplishment of the purposes of life.

## CHAPTER II

### THE INSTINCTIVE BASIS OF THE MIND

#### 2. COMPLEX EMOTIONS AND SENTIMENTS

IN the last chapter we saw that the instincts provided the elements of the structure of the mind, being those native dispositions or tendencies which determine the nature of the individual's response to the environment. We saw that the instincts were the paths made in the course of evolution for the outflow of the psychic energy, so that the life purpose of the organism can be obtained. This life purpose we considered under the three aspects of the preservation of life, the reproduction of life and the improvement of life; moreover, we can only measure the tremendous drive of the life impulse directed towards these ends when we see the force and volume of the energy poured out for their attainment. The instincts are thus the natural or inevitable response of the individual to any situation in which the life purpose is involved. In a rudimentary form in animals, in a more complex form in human beings, we can trace the intelligence which perceives and recognises the object which has a meaning for the individual in relation to his life purpose; the emotional force which supplies the energy for dealing with the object in an adequate way; and the striving or set of the mind which constitutes the will power and the intelligence for the suitable action. In every instinctive process

we thus have "knowing," "feeling" and "willing," the original types of all mental activity. The stimulus, that is, the suitable object, releases the psychic energy along the lines of thought, emotion and volition (cognition, affect and conation). The stronger the stimulus, the more "heightened" will each of these processes be. One of the results of the study of psychology is that we learn to pick up the stimuli which will most effectively release the psychic energy.

In the last chapter, also, in considering the instincts in detail, we saw that each instinct had its distinctive emotional side and that the emotion involved in the stimulation of an instinctive disposition was a primary emotion. We cannot analyse emotion beyond the simple primary emotion bound up with the instinctive response, that is, the response which man is bound to give to the situation of the environment by the fact of his constitution, dependent on the precise form which his evolution has taken. If he fails under any circumstances to give a suitable response to the situation as a human being, it is because the instinct in question is inhibited or repressed (although this is not to say that the force of that instinct does not work as a dynamic element in his unconscious mind when it is repressed from conscious life). The fact of a *suitable* response is important, because this implies that, as a self-respecting human being, he does not respond with fear, but with self-assertion, in the presence of an object which he can overcome, and that he never responds with anger except to one who by his own

action has placed himself outside the "herd." If the instinctive life of the individual is free, he will respond to the environment on a level which corresponds to the highest stage of development which human intelligence has reached.

If we study a little further the working of the human mind, we must recognise that human beings are capable of other responses to the environment than the simple instinctive response with its clear-cut emotion and its definite conative impulse. Certain objects and situations will arouse a complex feeling within the individual, resulting in a type of behaviour which is not the simple, definite action of the instinct. These complex emotions, if analysed, will, however, always be found to be a blend or compound of two or more of the primary emotions. Professor McDougall in his *Social Psychology*<sup>1</sup> has shown how the principal complex emotions may be analysed in this way into their constituents. For instance, the complex emotion of admiration, if analysed, will be recognised as a blend of the emotions of wonder and negative self-feeling. Such an emotion could only be experienced by a mind which was developed beyond the capacity of one simple emotional response to an object, leading to the appropriate action. The response which is involved in a complex emotion is an instinctive response developed on the cognitive side; that is to say, it implies a more delicate recognition and understanding of the object, a more intelligent estimate

<sup>1</sup> W. McDougall, *An Introduction to Social Psychology* (1923), Chapter V.

of it and of the self in relation to it, than is the case with a simple, instinctive reaction. Admiration implies the estimation of the object as something strange and unfamiliar, so that the emotion of wonder is evoked, but it also implies an estimation of it as something so beautiful (or wise or strong, if it be a person) that the self feels inferior in relation to it, with the result that the emotion of negative self-feeling is aroused through this more intelligent recognition of the nature of the object. Just so far in this nature of response as the cognitive side is more developed and the emotional side more complex, so is the conative side, the impulse or volition leading to vigorous action, less marked. The complex emotion leads to a type of behaviour rather than to vigorous action. Just as the two simple emotions of wonder and negative self-feeling blend to form the complex emotion of admiration, so do the two simple impulses of these instincts of curiosity and subjection blend to form the characteristic behaviour which marks the complex emotion. The impulse of curiosity is to approach and examine the strange object. The impulse of subjection is rather to shrink into one's self and avoid the notice of the superior object. The resulting behaviour of admiration is to approach the admired object as far as one's negative self-feeling or sense of inferiority will allow and there to stand and contemplate it. With regard to all complex emotions we may say that they tend to give rise to certain forms of behaviour, to certain definite bodily attitudes and to characteristic types of facial expression rather than to action of a particular kind.

This is clear if we take some further examples of complex emotions. Admiration we saw was a complex of wonder and negative self-feeling. If we add to this compound the emotion of fear, we get a still more complex emotion, that of awe. In the behaviour characteristic of awe the impulse of fear, which is flight, will enter, producing a desire to retreat from the object until it can be watched from a safe distance. Such an emotion might easily be aroused by some stupendous object in nature, such as a waterfall or a river in flood, which awakened admiration in the spectator by its majesty and at the same time aroused fear by the danger involved in its force. The consequent type of behaviour shows how the active impulses connected with these blending emotions (of wonder, subjection and fear) form balancing units in a complex reaction, definite in character, but precluding any violent activity. Another example that may be taken is the complex emotion of gratitude, a compound of the primary emotions of tender feeling and negative self-feeling. Tender feeling is produced in the mind of the individual in sympathetic response to someone who shows kindness to him; whilst negative self-feeling is awakened by the necessary superiority of the person who is able to bestow a benefit. In this case the active impulse of tender emotion is kept in check by the retiring impulse of negative self-feeling, resulting in behaviour and bodily attitude which express the mingled pleasure and humility.

Other complex emotions, such as those into which the primary emotion of anger enters as a component



element, show the same characteristics as regards their conative side. The emotions of anger and disgust aroused simultaneously by the same object will become fused in the complex emotion of scorn, the characteristic behaviour in this case showing how the impulse to attack and strike is kept in check by the impulse of disgust, which is to turn away and avoid the "disgusting" object. (One can imagine in a schoolboys' story, the hero saying to the villain, "I would not touch you with the end of a greasy barge pole.") Again, envy is a compound of anger and negative self-feeling, aroused in the individual's mind by someone who is enjoying, as he thinks, something which he himself ought to possess and to whom, at the same time, he feels inferior. The anger which would lead to open hostility is kept in check in this case by the negative self-feeling which urges avoidance of a face to face encounter. The complex emotion, however, finds an outlet in such behaviour and, markedly, in such facial expression as characterise hostility working underground.<sup>1</sup>

We have next to consider how the instinctive emotions become organised in the mind about the ideas of certain objects, so that emotions are henceforth not only aroused by some chance stimulus in the external world, but are liable to be aroused whenever the ideas of those objects are present to the mind. Apart from this organisation of emotions,

<sup>1</sup> Other examples of complex emotions are given by McDougall, furnishing us with the key to many characteristic types of human behaviour.

our emotional life would have no stability; we should react afresh to every stimulus with which we came in contact, and our character would remain totally unformed. But every emotional reaction which we experience is recorded in the mind and is there associated with the idea of the object which aroused that emotion. When we again come into contact with the same object, our emotional reaction is affected by the unconscious memory of the former reaction. The path to that particular reaction will be the easiest one, so that if our judgment of the object on the second occasion coincides with our first cognition of the object the same emotion will be instantly aroused in our minds. If this happens on several occasions, the emotion will become so closely associated in the mind with the idea of the object, that the effect of even the presentation of the idea of the object to the mind will be immediately to awaken that same emotion. This association once formed will become closer the more often and the more strongly the emotion is aroused in connection with the actual object, until finally, unless any conflicting emotion comes in to block the path which has been formed between the two, the association between idea and emotion will become permanent. As the same object will not under all circumstances arouse only one emotion, other emotions of a harmonious nature with the first will also become connected with the same idea, to be aroused either separately or together whenever that idea is stimulated in the mind. This permanent organisation of emotions about an idea

in the mind is a "sentiment." Once formed in the mind about the idea of a particular object, the sentiment will be naturally extended to all similar objects. The individual is thus no longer at the mercy of the environment, liable to receive fresh impressions from every object which he meets. He applies the results of his experience to new situations and unconsciously thinks of and feels about the new object in relation to his antecedent experience of similar objects.

The importance of these organisations of emotions or emotional dispositions (that is, emotions in their permanent possibility of excitement) in the mind may be estimated when we consider that an emotion is always linked to a conative impulse. A sentiment, therefore, contains in potentiality all the conative impulses of the emotions organised within it. In these conative impulses lie imbedded both the will and the practical intelligence of the individual, since when a man is "set on" achieving anything, urged on by the energy of an emotion, he will always find the way to accomplishment. Thus it is impossible for strong emotions to be associated with any object in the mind, without these emotions constantly issuing forth in volitional, intelligent action. We must, therefore, recognise in the sentiments permanent tendencies to feeling, to impulse, to action, and also to that play of intelligence which in every higher instinctive reaction finds the best means to the end.

Following McDougall we can distinguish three classes of sentiments, taking as typical sentiments

those of love, hate and respect, and relating other sentiments to these three types.<sup>1</sup> The nature of the sentiment will in each case depend on the nature of the principal emotion organised within the sentiment. Within the sentiment of love the principal emotion is that of tender feeling. If we analyse the sentiment of parental love we shall find organised about the object of the sentiment, first, the tender feeling of the parent; secondly, the positive self-feeling which the parent feels in relation to the child, stimulated by the child's dependence on the parent and the child's confidence in and admiration for the parent; and, thirdly, the negative self-feeling which the parent feels in relation to the young, growing life. Other emotions will probably also be included within this sentiment of love: such emotions, namely, as are liable to be aroused in the face of certain situations in which the object of the sentiment is found, these emotions being called out in relation to persons or objects that affect or influence the object of the sentiment. For instance, if the child is in danger the parent will experience fear on behalf of the child, or he may feel anger towards some person who would harm him, the emotion in both cases being aroused by an object which is in relation to the child. In the latter case two opposing emotions (tender feeling and anger) will animate the mind of the parent at the same time, but these, being aroused by two different objects, will not conflict in the mind but will reinforce one another in energising appropriate action.

<sup>1</sup> See W. McDougall, *An Introduction to Social Psychology*, Chapter VI.

There are other complex emotions, such as pity, admiration, or gratitude, which may be organised within the sentiment of love, according to the nature of the object of the sentiment, whether child, parent, sexual object, friend or member of a family. Other sentiments which fall into the same class as love are liking, attachment, affection, etc., in which the tender emotion, though present, has never been stimulated with such intensity as marks this emotion when organised within the sentiment of love. All sentiments of this type have the effect of drawing the mind towards the object.

Within the sentiment of hate the chief constituent emotion is the primary emotion of anger. Fear and negative self-feeling will also be included within this typical sentiment, since the person for whom we have a sentiment of hatred is evidently one who arouses anger in us at one time when we think of the way in which he thwarts our desires and who arouses fear and negative self-feeling in us at other times when we are conscious of his superior power. Other emotional dispositions, such as scorn, loathing, envy (into all of which either fear, anger or disgust enters), may be organised within the sentiment, to be brought into play under suitable conditions. As in the sentiment of love the conative impulses of tender feeling and the other constructive emotions are included within the "meaning" or scope of the sentiment, so in the case of hate the conative impulses of anger and the other destructive emotions are involved in the sentiment. As long as the object continues to have the same meaning for the

individual, so long will these emotions with their destructive impulses remain organised about the idea of the object in his mind. Other sentiments included within the same class are dislike, aversion, antipathy and all such sentiments as withdraw the mind from the object. Such sentiments as love and hate are probably always first organised within the mind in relation to a person and then afterwards extended to other objects which have the same meaning to the individual as had the original object (as a man may extend to his university, his *alma mater*, the sentiment of love which was first formed in his mind in relation to his mother).

The third class of sentiment has as its typical sentiment the sentiment of respect. In this class, McDougall places the "self-regarding sentiment," because he considers the normal form of this sentiment to be self-respect. The self-regarding sentiment is that group of emotions organised about the idea of the self. The two chief emotions organised within this sentiment will obviously be the emotions of positive and negative self-feeling, since when we think of ourselves we usually think of ourselves in relation to some person or persons, to whom we feel either superior or inferior. It is the sign of a healthy self-regarding sentiment if these two emotions are both readily called into play, alternating according to the demands of the situation. If a person were to be always self-assertive and incapable of experiencing the emotion of negative self-feeling in the presence of others, he would be socially unbearable, his self-regarding sentiment being one of egotistical

pride rather than self-respect. Probably such a person would also become overbearing, since the instinct of pugnacity towards other people would become associated with his idea of himself. On the other hand, if an individual in his view of himself is too much swayed by negative self-feeling, it is probable that the emotion of fear will become organised within his self-regarding sentiment, making him unduly afraid of the opinion of other people. Self-respect implies a balance of the two emotions of positive and negative self-feeling and is the condition of the normal "social self."

So far we have considered sentiments in an abstract way, taking them as unitary systems or forces in the mind and noting their composition. We have now to see how they are actually built up and how they enter as deciding factors into the individual's character.

## CHAPTER III

### THE BUILDING UP OF CHARACTER

#### THE INDIVIDUAL'S RESPONSE TO EXPERIENCE

IN the first two chapters we examined those innate instinctive dispositions in the human being, which cause him to respond in a perfectly definite way to his environment. We saw in the instincts a delicate and intricate organisation of nerves and muscles which enables the psychic energy, once aroused by a suitable stimulus, to be poured out along the instinctive channels in action which will further the life purpose of the individual. We saw that the natural end of the instincts is to bring the individual into such a relation with the environment as to render possible the full expression of his powers. In instincts we recognised the fundamental elements of the mind, discovering in the instinctive response an example of the typical mental process, which involves the threefold mental activity of "cognition," "affect" and "conation" (thinking, feeling and striving). We saw that the emotion aroused in the true instinctive process is a primary or simple emotion and that out of these primary, instinctive emotions the complex emotions have their origin, in which the blending of emotion leads to a complex type of behaviour of a definite character, though lacking the force of an action energised by a simple or primary emotion. We then



examined the way in which sentiments are formed by an organisation of emotions, primary and complex, about an idea in the mind. We saw that the impulses connected with the sentiment of love are constructive impulses, owing to this sentiment having as its central driving force the emotion of tender feeling, and that the impulses of hatred are destructive impulses, resulting from the organisation of anger, fear and kindred emotions within this sentiment. We saw that a healthy self-regarding sentiment depends on a right balance of the two emotions of positive and negative self-feeling within the sentiment. We noticed that a wrong type of self-regarding sentiment may be formed, either if the emotion of fear should be organised within this sentiment owing to a systematic depreciation of the self, the sentiment then taking the form of self-distrust; or if the aggressive tendency becomes bound up with the sentiment, marking it as pride. As another variation of the self-regarding sentiment, we may note that the emotion of disgust may be organised with the idea of the self, leading to a sentiment of self-despair or self-hatred. All such emotions give a wrong feeling tone to this sentiment, which at the lowest should be self-respect and at a higher level self-confidence.

Using our theoretical knowledge of the nature of the instinctive responses and of the way in which sentiments are formed, we have now to see how the first sentiments actually come into existence in the child's mind and how these determine his after-response to experience and play the principal part

in the formation of his character. The child's first personal experiences, that is, the first experiences to which he responds with any personal emotion, are almost entirely those connected with his mother. (The experience which the child meets with in connection with mother substitutes, such as nurses, must be taken as roughly coinciding with those connected with his mother.) On his mother he is at first entirely dependent; therefore he instinctively responds to her with the instinct of submission. If she meets all his needs with unvarying kindness and patience, constantly giving expression to the "tender emotion" which as the parent she feels towards him, he will respond to her love with sympathetic emotion, that is, emotion caught from her emotion rather than an emotion awakened towards her as an object, but of the same nature as hers, that is, the tender feeling which delights in caressing and being caressed. Here already, therefore, we have the rudiments of a sentiment of love for his mother in the infant's mind. On the other hand, by her training and discipline, the mother implants in the child's mind the germs of a sentiment of self-respect. She gives him in these early days the idea of the necessity of controlling certain impulses; so that eventually he comes not to "feel well" about himself apart from exercising his self-control: his ability for adapting himself to the demands of social life (negative self-feeling) balancing his self-satisfaction (positive self-feeling) at his own power of self-control. The purpose of the mother's training is to teach him to adjust himself to the herd; while he responds to this

training instinctively, because, infant though he is, he possesses (in his unconscious mind) the knowledge that he must act "socially" in order fully to achieve his own desires and purposes in life. His self-regarding sentiment in this early, rudimentary stage will therefore involve an idea of himself and feelings about himself based on fulfilling certain requirements imposed upon him by his mother. His natural instinct of submission towards the one on whom he depends for his very existence is turned to account by her when she thus implants in his mind the necessity of adapting himself to reality. In learning self-control he is acquiring not only a sentiment of self-respect but a sentiment of respect for others. We thus come to an important point in the formation of character: namely, that on the nature of the quality of the self-regarding sentiment as first formed in the child's mind depends the nature of his attitude towards the world in general. If his self-regarding sentiment is one of self-respect, based on the fulfilment of all social requirements, he will (or should) never have any fear of the world. He will face the "herd" with confidence, because his conduct is suited to his membership of the herd. If, however, as an infant and a child, he is allowed to pursue his own pleasure regardless of the claims of others, his self-regarding sentiment will be formed as a sentiment of pride, unbalanced by the submission and deference which he should feel first for his mother and then for the herd; consequently he will always have a fear of the herd, which may show itself as a fear of divine judgment or of human retribution, preventing

him from attaining the self-confidence of the man who, respecting himself and others, can face the herd with friendly feelings.

We must now consider a little further the child's sentiment of love for his mother, this being perhaps the most important of all his sentiments, since his first feelings towards his mother largely determine both his subsequent attitude towards the world and towards himself. As the infant is entirely dependent on the mother for his very life as well as for his comfort and happiness, the mother represents for him his first idea of power. The idea which he forms of his mother is therefore the deciding factor in determining his future conception of power in general, that is, his idea of God or his generalised idea of Life or Nature. If his thought of the power of the universe is unfriendly, such a conception will later have an inhibiting effect upon his mental life. His idea of power, as represented by his mother, should be of a favourable power, which, as long as he fulfils his part in keeping those rules of conduct which are incumbent on every human being, even on a child, will assist him in every way to achieve self-expression and to develop his powers to the full. The child's sentiment towards his mother should therefore include gratitude as towards one who helps him in finding and developing characteristic means of self-expression.

The mother also gives to a child his first idea of authority. She imposes her will upon him in order to make him act according to what is her idea of right conduct. If this authority is

exercised in a way that will be helpful to the child, in teaching him to meet the social requirements of life and to find his place without friction within the herd, he will respect his mother. In fact, he would not respect his mother unless she fulfilled her responsibilities in this way. If she allowed him to do as he pleased, he would feel this lack of a standard in her. He has not yet reached the stage of moral autonomy; he cannot yet set his own standard; but unconsciously he knows that such a standard is needed. He will submit willingly to the authority of his mother if that authority is consciously directed towards helping him to find his right place in the social world. He will then carry over this submission and respect incorporated in his sentiment for his mother into all relationships with authority in after life (until as adult he becomes his own authority).

It is important that a feeling of admiration should be included in a child's sentiment for his mother. Such admiration depends rather on qualities of character in the mother than on outward appearance. It depends on her unvarying kindness, patience and interest in all her children's pursuits; it depends also on her self-confidence, on her ability to meet all emergencies, on her wisdom and on her cheerful outlook on life. She must be confident herself in order to give the child confidence in life and must always know her own mind, so that the child can always rely on her. The more a child admires his mother, the more anxious will he be to earn her approval. This desire she can turn to good account in the training of his character by giving him approval

for the right things: namely, for effort far more than for success and for any act that shows that he is adapting himself to the requirements of his social environment. She can also stimulate his intelligence; probably she will not need to stimulate his love of athletic prowess, but she can at least not discourage his daring or implant fears that are foreign to a child's mind. The child's admiration for his mother is all the more important, because on the mother the boy founds his first idea of the opposite sex, whilst for both the boy and girl the mother is the first *love object*, that is, the first object of the libido in its earliest pre-sexual stage. The organisation of the later sexual life will depend largely on the nature of the relationship with the first love object of the child's experience.

The child's sentiment of love for the father should include the same emotions of gratitude, respect, and admiration, incorporated with tender feeling, as mark his sentiment for his mother. The father, like the mother, represents the idea of power and authority in the child's mind. The sentiment for the father, however, is organised later than the sentiment for the mother, owing to the fact that a more intimate relation exists between the young child and the mother than between the child and the father. The father is more removed from the child and does not, like the mother, minister to his immediate necessities. A child has not therefore the same sense of entire dependence on the father. For this reason it seems likely that the child's thought of God, as a friendly or hostile power,

and his conception of the Universe, as a Something Trustworthy or as a Sinister Unknown, are founded on his experience of his mother rather than of his father. On the other hand, his feelings for his father are more especially carried over into his feelings towards the concrete manifestations of authority, namely, such organisations for the maintenance of law and order as he encounters first at school and later in the governing power of his country. If then in his father he experiences an abuse of authority or deliberate opposition to his legitimate desires for the free expression of his personality, he is likely to carry over to all forms of authority the antagonism (bordering on hatred) that he felt for the parent who thwarted him in those early days when he needed help and encouragement.<sup>1</sup>

The child's admiration for the father has a characteristic quality of its own both in the boy and the girl. To the boy the father represents the fulfilment of his own ambitions, as the embodiment of what he hopes to be when he himself

<sup>1</sup> It is a curious fact that a child (or an adult) may entertain sentiments of love and hate for the same person, as, for instance, for a parent whom the child admires but by whom he feels himself to be dominated. These sentiments will sway the mind at different times according to the psychological situation. A sentiment of hate may exist in the unconscious, whilst a person's outward conduct is controlled by the sentiment of "love." It may then reveal itself in such chance phrases as "I should like to shoot him," or, "I should like to wring her neck," directed not against the real object of the sentiment, but against some other person who thwarts the individual's will. In the desire to kill we can always recognise the destructive impulse of hate.

is grown up. A zest is thus added to his admiration of his father's greatness by the idea that he will one day enjoy the same sense of power. In the girl's mind the admiration for the father has a spice of romance. The small girl enjoys companionship with her father; she likes to have a sense of mystery and secrecy as between herself and him and to enjoy adventures in his company. It is evident, therefore, that the nature of the girl's feeling for her father will largely determine her attitude towards members of the opposite sex in later days.

Considering how largely a child's attitude towards the world and towards life depends on the sentiments formed for the parents, it is clear that the organisation of fear within the sentiment entertained by a child for either parent would have an unfortunate effect upon his character. The child who fears his parent, as the result of unkindness or injustice received at the hands of either father or mother, will, of necessity, carry over that sense of fear towards all persons who stand in later life in a relation to him similar to that of his father or mother. An attitude of distrust is thus formed in his mind, difficult for him afterwards to overcome. This feeling will hinder free and natural relationships with many persons who later might be kindly disposed towards him or who might help him in his career. In order to gain confidence in the face of the larger "social" world, the child needs reliability in the world that immediately surrounds him. Any circumstance that makes his world insecure renders him fearful and unhappy in the face of unknown dangers. If he



witnesses disagreements between his parents, he feels unconsciously as if the very pillars of his universe were shaken. It is as if in his mind a cataclysm were always impending, threatening the fabric of his life.

Again, a child should not feel too great a sense of inferiority in the presence of his parents. An attitude of submission and deference towards the parents is, as we saw, natural, but this may be unduly increased by constant criticism or fault-finding. A child cannot form an independent estimate of himself, and therefore takes the opinion of others as his own. The result of too much criticism is that his self-regarding sentiment is weighted down on the side of negative self-feeling. Robbed of his self-confidence he will compensate for feeling inferior by creating an exaggerated phantasy of power and by adopting a critical attitude towards the world. This attitude will produce tension and division within the self. The necessity for compensation will result in a tendency to thoughts and feelings (such as anger and revenge) of which the child himself is ashamed when he becomes conscious of them and which warp the generosity of his character. It is not only by direct impressions that the parent may introduce fear or undue inferiority into the child's self-regarding sentiment. A parent may produce the same result by religious teaching, which the child accepts because it comes from the parent with the suggestive force created by the parental authority. The child may be tormented by ideas of hell, by ideas of an unfriendly God always waiting to

judge him and to spoil his enjoyment, and, worst of all mental tortures, by the idea that pain is the proof of wrong doing, the punishment inflicted by an angry God. Deep down in his unconscious mind these ideas will remain, long after as adult he has ceased to believe in an actual hell. They will make him afraid to adventure in life, because any pain and trouble which may be the price of his endeavour will seem to him the judgment for his sin. On the other hand, the unconscious thought will be that if he can propitiate an offended Deity by the infliction of pain upon himself, he can continue in any course of self-indulgence for which he wants an excuse, counting virtue to himself for his suffering. Here again is a warping influence at work in the mind of the individual, affecting the free development of personality and character. A child should be taught the conditions on which he may stand up to himself and before the universe without fear or a crippling sense of inferiority.

Next in importance to the sentiments for the parents in a child's mind are the sentiments which he forms for his brothers and sisters. Probably any normal child has a sentiment of love or affection for his brothers and sisters, corresponding with the fact of the common home and the common parents. There should also be added to the sentiment that "active sympathy"<sup>1</sup> which comes with common interests between the members of a family. The quality of the sentiment which a child forms for

<sup>1</sup> See McDougall, *An Introduction to Social Psychology* (1923), p. 168.

his brothers and sisters will largely depend on the character of the parents and on the relation which subsists between the parents. The tender emotion which a child feels for his parents is, as we have seen, largely induced by the expression of the parents' feeling for the child. In the same way the tender feeling which belongs to the child's sentiment for his brothers or sisters is largely a reflection of the tender feeling which the parent shows for all the children and also of the tender feeling expressed by each parent for the other. Harmony between the parents is reflected in harmony between the children. Further, an equal distribution of love by the parents between the children strengthens the sentiment of love which each child feels for the others. If one child is favoured because of physical weakness, or for any other reason, this attitude produces a feeling of rivalry between the children, owing to the sense of injustice occasioned by the treatment of one child without any account of merit. Jealousy will thus enter into the sentiment entertained by the children near in age for the child thus favoured (since the elder children will probably be able successfully to look after themselves). Nor does favouritism by the parent react advantageously on the character of the favourite. Promotion without merit makes for pride and produces in the individual a tendency to seek from the world in general those favours which the parent has bestowed on the child: favours given with the improper motive of helping the weaker child to those things which it should have won for itself.

It is doubtful if any entirely new sentiments are formed in the mind after the first earliest sentiments: the self-regarding sentiment, the sentiment for the parents and the sentiment for the brothers and sisters.<sup>1</sup> The individual's responses to experience henceforth will be based on these earliest responses. The old sentiments will be transferred, mixed and modified, to new cases; or, to put it in another way, a path will have been formed in the mind by which the energy will tend to travel in the same direction whenever a new situation is presented which has any similarity to the old.<sup>2</sup> Towards persons who resemble the individual's parents, whether in office or function or by similarities of character, attainment or even of dress or appearance, a man will form sentiments on the analogy of those formed for the parents; towards any persons resembling the elder brothers and sisters, who play a peculiarly important part in the child's life by the intermediate position they hold between the parents and the child's contemporaries and who are the objects of special admiration and deference, the individual will experience feelings similar to those called out by the original objects of those

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that a parent-substitute (psychological parent) may fill the place of actual parent and a brother or sister-substitute the place of actual brother or sister in a child's life.

<sup>2</sup> The sentiment for the sexual partner (which, of course, may be found in a weaker form in boy-and-girl attachments) is unique in its character, but this distinctiveness does not appear to rest on any new emotional elements introduced into this sentiment of "love," but on the intensity of certain among the emotional elements.

feelings; whilst towards a man's contemporaries he will feel as he did towards those who were nearly of an age with him in his family. Estimations of the opposite sex will be markedly influenced by the relationship, whether of co-operation or antagonism, which the individual as boy or girl previously formed with contemporaries of the opposite sex in his or her family. Of great importance also is the sentiment formed in a child's mind for any younger member of the family. A younger brother or sister may stimulate very strongly the expression of tender emotion, so that a sentiment of love markedly developed on the protective side will be organised in the mind of the individual, influencing the formation of character and making that person especially responsive to children for the rest of his or her days.

It is obvious, therefore, that the character of the individual depends, primarily, on the nature of the earliest formed sentiments. Love, as we have seen, is the constructive type of sentiment. The child who grows up with well organised sentiments of love without any admixture of fear and jealousy will be the man or woman of constructive character. His or her mind will be adapted to make new friendships and to form new sentiments of love. The energy will be released along constructive lines, because he or she will have the necessary stimulus to activity which comes from the love and admiration of others. On the other hand, a well compacted, well balanced self-regarding sentiment is needed for the completion of a strong character. There must be

self-confidence for facing the world, as well as a desire for approval and deference to the opinion of others. A fine character is based on a right attitude of the individual towards himself or herself as well as a right attitude towards the world.

## CHAPTER IV

### DIFFERENCES OF PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

#### HEREDITY AND ENVIRONMENT

So far we have seen that there are certain definite responses which the individual is bound to make in the face of experience, by the very fact that he is a human being with a certain type of mental constitution. We have seen how out of these native instinctive responses there are built up, from infancy, organised groups of emotions, which, with the impulses that belong to them, become attached to the ideas of certain objects in the mind. We may remark that memory seems to be inherent in the instinctive process, implying that when any object has strongly aroused an emotion in the mind, there is a power to record an image of that object, so that it may be recognised again and by means of the associated emotion may call into play the appropriate action: the memory group in the mind including not only the original emotion aroused, but also the feeling tone of pleasure or pain belonging to the successful or unsuccessful action which was initiated in regard to it. About these memory images or ideas the groups of organised, associated emotions grow up in the individual's mind which are called sentiments, and which are based on those instinctive responses which form the essential feature of the

mental constitution which he shares with all other human beings. The characteristic way in which any human being reacts to experience within the limits of his instinctive mental constitution depends, however, on certain differences in mental constitution and on certain environmental differences which we have now to examine.

The first difference of mental constitution depending on hereditary factors is the difference which we call by the name of temperament. Temperament is mental constitution as influenced or determined by bodily factors. There are certain physical conditions which favour certain particular ways of thinking, feeling and acting. The way in which lungs, heart, liver and other organs function helps to determine in the individual the attitude which he takes towards the world and towards himself. The Greeks distinguished four types of temperament: the sanguine, phlegmatic, bilious or choleric and melancholic. The temperament was thought to depend on the proportion of certain fluids in the body (the blood, the phlegm, the yellow bile and the black bile). The modern view relates temperament to inherited differences in the nervous system, both cerebro-spinal and sympathetic, as giving rise to varying modes of thinking and feeling. Since these differences in the nervous constitution are thought to be connected with the glands of internal secretion (endocrine glands), such a theory would be to a certain extent in a line with the classical theory.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> H. H. Goddard, *Psychology of the Normal and Subnormal*, pp. 228, 230.



There can be no doubt that differences in physical constitution play an important part in determining the way in which a man or woman reacts to his or her environment. A bias is given to the individual's mode of thinking and feeling by the physical or bodily conditions of his existence. The person with good lungs, for example, will tend to have more self-confidence than the person with inferior organs. Such a person, other things being equal, will tend to take the aggressive attitude in the face of danger, rather than an attitude of fear and inferiority leading to flight. The feeling of physical well-being connected with a good circulation corresponds, again, with a buoyant temperament. In this case there will be no fear or dread of a situation, because such an individual knows that he can cope successfully with it. He will therefore tend to respond with self-assertion rather than submission in the presence of other people and will probably become a leader in the herd. Superiority of physical strength or unusual brain capacity will tend to give the individual confidence under circumstances in which either of these qualities is required and consequently to determine a reaction by pugnacity or self-assertion rather than by fear or submission. The sense of strength or power (of body or brain) also seems to favour a reaction by parental instinct (tender emotion) in the face of any object that makes an appeal to the superior strength of the individual. When the physical feelings are conditioned by faulty bodily functions, the individual will, on the other hand, tend to feel distrust of himself in face of a

difficult situation and to feel inferiority in the presence of others; whilst his parental instinct will probably also be inhibited owing to the lack of self-confidence.

This tendency to react by one instinct rather than another gives a certain cast to the mental disposition which we characterise in common language by speaking of a "kindly disposition," a "timid disposition," a "haughty disposition," and so on. Although environmental factors may have their influence in producing a certain type of disposition, yet there is no doubt that the inherited physical factors—the conditions of nervous constitution, of circulation and digestion and other important physical functions which give the feeling tone to the individual's self-consciousness—are the primary factors which determine the cast of the individual's temperament and disposition and decide the characteristic way in which he reacts to experience. Organic or functional inferiority of the physical constitution tends to produce reactions in which fear and negative self-feeling mark the tone of the personal consciousness, whilst a compensatory tendency towards pride and egotism forms an undercurrent of this type of (melancholic) temperament. Temperamental courage, on the other hand, the result of healthy functioning of the bodily organs, tends towards a hopeful outlook on life and is the basis of character in that type of person who has a good opinion of himself and is also a good comrade. It is certain that the sentiments which these two different temperamental types of person will build

up from their earliest days will be very different in kind, both as regards the self-regarding sentiment and as regards the sentiments formed in relation to other people.

The second difference in mental constitution, which is closely allied to the temperamental difference, may be classed as inherited difference of mental "make-up" or mental equipment. Such difference is probably due to individual variations in the structure of the nerve cells of the brain. According to the type of the individual's mental equipment will be the characteristic nature of his response to the environment: that is to say, he will tend to elaborate his mental processes on that side of each process which gives most play to his characteristic type of mental activity (depending on the relative subtlety and sensitiveness of the nerve cells involved). The typical mental process presents, as we have seen, three aspects of mental activity: cognition, affect and conation. Any response may therefore be elaborated on any of these three sides. The person of intellectual type is the person who tends to elaborate his mental processes on the side of cognition. In response to any object in the environment which (as stimulus) starts the mental process, he will be concerned to estimate, to weigh and to judge that object and to distinguish and appreciate its essential qualities, with the result that the emotional and conative side of the process will be subordinated to the activity of judgment and intellect. The artist or the scientist may be moved to action as the result of an artistic or intellectual appreciation, but the

result in such a case of the elaboration of the cognitive side of the process is the interposition of a bar to the quick passing of energy from emotion to action which marks the more simple instinctive response.

The emotional type of person is the person who is not mentally equipped to estimate objects on intellectual grounds, but who judges of them simply as objects having some relation to the primitive needs and desires of the human organism and responds readily with the appropriate emotion. Such emotion carries with it an intelligence of its own. It is probable that those types of intelligence which we call intuition, second sight, clairvoyance, telepathy, and so on, are the special intelligences of the instinctive process elaborated on the emotional side. On the other hand, the greater intensity in the emotional reaction does not ensure the passing over of the psychic energy into fruitful conative channels. The individual, absorbed in his emotional experience, is not sufficiently free to express himself in action beyond that dictated by the pressing emotional need of the moment.

The person of practical character, or the "man of action," is the person whose tendency is to elaborate his mental processes on the conative side. The characteristic quality of such a person's mental equipment is the ability to weigh means to an end, involving that kind of intelligence that can visualise the end or aim which will be of advantage to the individual and can conceive action which will bring about that end. In the man of action there must also be the power to keep his aim in front of him.

He must not, therefore, be diverted by mere intellectual considerations nor waste his energy in emotional display. In the man of this type of character there must be sufficiently intelligent cognition of the object or situation in order that he may initiate the right action, and there must also be sufficient intensity of emotion to infuse force into his action, but the essential feature of his mental processes will be the quick passing over of the energy to those "spots" of his mental organisation where action is initiated and where the power resides for the transforming of an idea into reality.

Related to each of these three types of mental equipment, the intellectual, the emotional and the practical, we find characteristic attitudes and ways of responding to the experiences of life, with consequent differences of character in the individuals who belong to these three types. The distinction between the types lies in the difference between the stimuli which will awaken the same response in each. A stimulus which will carry an instinctive response to completion in one type will carry it only to the cognitive stage in another type and to the emotional stage in a third type. One person may be perfectly calm in the presence of danger, whilst another person may instantly turn to fly and a third may take elaborate means of concealment. The first person nicely estimates the probability of danger from the awe-inspiring object and by a right appreciation of that object stops short of the emotional stage of fear; the second immediately reacts with fear and without further thought carries out the impulse which is the

natural outcome of fear; the third person, animated by fear, is yet able to think out a course of action which will best conduce to his safety. Each of the three persons reacts differently to the same stimulus; consequently each of the three will need a different stimulus to arouse the energy for the carrying out of the mental process to its full completion. The person of intellectual disposition will tend to build up his personal sentiments more slowly than the emotional person, because he will find in his environment fewer stimuli which will arouse in him a strong emotion. Once, however, having found an object which will form a sufficient stimulus to act as a gathering point for his emotions, the sentiment which is formed in his mind about that object will probably be of a more stable nature than any sentiment in the mind of the emotional person, who is apt to respond emotionally without a considered judgment. The person of practical character, with definite aims in life and a strong, purposeful outlook, will tend to form sentiments about persons who stand in relation to those aims, his sentiments being founded on a judgment of, and emotional reaction to, other people according to whether they help him or hinder him in his ambitions.

Two other contrasting types of mental constitution have been made familiar to us by Jung under the names of extravert and introvert. The extravert is the person whose mental attitude is an objective one, his tendency being to view objects as they are in themselves and to react emotionally according to this view of them. The introvert is the person with a

subjective attitude, who views the object and reacts to it in its relation to himself and his own scheme of thought. The "extravert," according to Jung, "always places the accent on the feelings that are connected with the object, whereas the introvert always puts the accent on the ego and is as much detached from the object as possible."<sup>1</sup> Again, "the introvert is characterised by the thought standpoint; the extrovert by the feeling standpoint." We may say that the introvert reacts to the object by an intellectual appreciation of how the object affects himself, whilst the extravert is in simple emotional relationship with the object without any self-criticism or self-estimation being raised by it. In a later essay Jung has traced these two mental characteristics to their first manifestation in a child's attitude towards his surroundings. He says, "one of the earliest types of introversion in a child is a reflective, thoughtful manner, a pronounced shyness, even anxiety towards unknown objects. Very early there appears also a tendency towards self-assertion in relation to the object and efforts to master the latter. Whatever is unknown is regarded with mistrust. . . . When he asks questions, it is not so much out of curiosity or desire for sensation, but because he wants names, meanings and explanations that offer him a subjective assurance over against the object. I have seen an introvert child who made her first efforts to walk only after she was familiar with all the things in the room with which she might come in contact. Thus very early

<sup>1</sup> Jung, *Collected papers on Analytical Psychology*, p. 392.

in an introverted child can be noticed the characteristic defensive attitude which the adult introvert shows towards the object, just as in the case of the extraverted child one can observe very early a marked assurance and enterprise and a blissful trustfulness in his relations with objects. This, then, is the basic characteristic of the extraverted attitude: the psychic life is displayed, so to speak, outside the individual in objects and relationships to objects. . . In contrast with this, the introvert always conducts himself towards the object as if the latter possessed a superior power over him against which he had to steady himself."<sup>1</sup> Thus the introvert tends to withdraw into himself in relation to the object and to make himself master of it by an intellectual appreciation of its meaning in his scheme of the universe. The reaction to experience will therefore be very different in the introvert and the extravert. The self-assurance of the extravert allows him to judge of things on their own merit; whilst such a judgment is impossible for the introvert, because he always estimates objects in a dynamic relation to his own ego. His world is the world of thought and his self-feeling depends on presenting to himself his experiences in the intellectualised form in which they will fit in with the world which he has created for himself. He will therefore build up his sentiments in a very close relation to his self-regarding sentiment, which will be the central feature of his mental constitution. His emotions will be called out most

<sup>1</sup> Jung, *Psychological Types* in *Problems of Personality* (Collection of Essays dedicated to Dr. Morton Prince), p. 296.



strongly by the persons who minister to his positive self-feeling, who help him to understand the universe and himself. The extravert, less self-centred, will build up more sentiments of a less concentrated type. The difference between the two lies in the way in which each judges of the facts of experience. The introvert relates all experience to himself, weaving his impressions of objects into the fabric of his self-consciousness;<sup>1</sup> the extravert relates himself to the object, tending to assimilate himself to the object, which possesses for him "an extreme and even decisive significance."<sup>2</sup>

So far we have considered the hereditary factors which help to determine differences of personal equipment in the individual. We have now to take into account those external forces which also in each case tend to modify the individual response to experience. These external forces are comprised by the term environment: by which we mean the surroundings which give to the individual his first idea of life and which, during that age when he is drinking in impressions without the power of reacting on his surroundings, determine his attitude towards the world and towards himself. Environmental influences work in subtle interplay with innate instinctive tendencies and with individual temperamental conditions to form the character. We have said that according to a man's temperamental endowment, so he tends to react to any

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Byron: "Are not the mountains, waves and skies, a part  
Of me and of my Soul, as I of them?"

<sup>2</sup> Jung, *Psychological Types*, 1923, p. 11.

particular situation with one instinct rather than with another, and that a cast is given to his mental disposition by those instincts with which he tends most frequently to react. But the influence of the environment needs also to be taken into account in its power of modifying the mental disposition. An instinctive tendency to be aroused into activity needs a stimulus. In order that the energy may become accustomed to the path of any particular reaction, there must further be the repetition of a stimulus from the external environment. Apart from such repeated stimulation it is doubtful if the cast of disposition would ever be clearly marked in the individual. For instance, we speak of a man of kindly disposition; but if such a man had lived a solitary life, apart from the companionship of brothers and sisters and with no young life ever dependent on his exertions, would that kindliness (the result, no doubt, partly of temperamental factors) ever have come into play? In considering the character-forming possibilities of the environment, we must think of how far it supplies stimuli for the awakening of the instinctive energy. A man or woman might have brilliant possibilities bound up with his or her original mental constitution and yet his or her character might remain only half formed, because the environment had lacked the stimuli which would call the potentialities, intellectual, emotional or conative, into outward expression.

Again, in considering the influence of any environment on the formation of character, we must think of the kind of emotional and conative activity which

it calls into expression. We have to ask, does the environment call out the best powers of the individual? This question concerns the nature of the sentiments which the child first builds up, since it is in response to the character of his environment that he builds up either the right or the wrong type of self-regarding sentiment and either the right or wrong sentiments for his parents and those who form his earliest personal environment. If the self-regarding sentiment, which is first formed in the child's passive stage through the influence of those who surround him and who teach and train him, is one of self-respect, and if his first sentiments for other people are sentiments of love and admiration, unmixed with fear, then we may say that right influences are at work and that the moulding effect of the environment will tend towards the building up of the finest type of character.

Keeping in mind the three factors which thus determine character: the racial, inherited factor of the instinctive dispositions; the individual bodily and mental constitution inherited from the parents; and the environmental conditions which call into play these innate tendencies and mental powers of the individual: it is not an impossible task to relate the character traits which we see manifested in any particular case to their right source, or to disentangle the forces which have been at work.<sup>1</sup> In this connection it is important to notice the close

<sup>1</sup> To an experienced eye, even the expression of a person's face will reveal the nature of the sentiments built up in early days.

correspondence that exists between the hereditary factor (that is, the bodily and mental predispositions inherited from the parents) and the environmental factor. For instance, the child of neurotic parents, inheriting a neurotic tendency, that is a nervous system weak or easily exhausted with all its mental equivalents, will have the special environment furnished by the neurotic parents. We may even say that a bad heredity usually implies a bad environment and that a good heredity usually corresponds with a healthy environment. Any social therapeutic work therefore must have a double aim. It must attempt to effect an improvement in the environment by teaching the child's elders some of the conditions of mental health and it must correct the effects of a bad heredity by teaching the child a better reaction to life: even to the conditions of a faulty environment.

## CHAPTER V

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE POWER URGE

#### HOW THE CHILD GROWS UP INTO THE ADULT

THE central subject of "Individual Psychology" is the progress of the individual from the psychological stage of the "infant" to the psychological stage of the "adult." The infantile stage is the passive stage of dependence, in which power is enjoyed as a gift from others. The adult stage is the active stage, in which the individual reacts on the environment instead of being moulded passively by it; the stage of self-dependence, when power is enjoyed as something won, having been earned by the exertions of the individual. Although the infantile stage is one that every human being has necessarily to pass through, yet this stage becomes a negative one, if the man or woman fails to pass on to the more advanced attitude. In order to become capable of reacting effectively on the environment, the individual must make use of his experience. He must learn from the discipline of life and not be afraid of passing on to each new stage of added responsibility.

The passing on from one stage of growth and development to the next is sometimes spoken of as "rebirth." In the life of the individual there are several important stages, which no doubt correspond

to inner physiological changes, at which a human being finds himself or herself at the cross roads, when there may be either progress forward or regression back to an earlier stage of psychological development. Whether the man or the woman is able to take the step forward depends on events that have gone before: on the attitude towards life and towards the individual's own self that has been acquired as the result of previous experience and of the manner of the individual's reaction to that experience as determined by his or her mental constitution.

The power urge corresponds to each man's desire to impress himself on the environment and to leave a mark on the plastic surface of the social life that surrounds him. This power urge necessarily bears a relation to the particular gifts and faculties possessed by any individual. Although every human being wants to give expression to those physical and mental powers with which he is endowed as a part of his human inheritance, yet the strength of the power urge depends on the possession of some characteristic gift or mental quality, some special development of the brain on the side of intellect, emotion, or practical capacity, which gives an added drive to the individual's desire for self-expression. Whether a man or woman will ever reach the summit of self-realisation depends on whether he or she has a sufficient stimulus to draw out all their latent powers and to counteract the inertia of the pleasure-loving part of their personality. The only perfectly effective stimulus is that which comes from the realisation of an ideal,

the stimulus, namely, which acts on the individual who is giving all his or her best powers for the common good and is thus reacting fully to that creative urge which, whilst it ensures the individual's immortality, also furthers the progress of the race.

We have seen that the trend of the individual's mental development is largely determined by the first idea that he gains of himself and by the emotions that are habitually associated with that idea. During the early years of childhood, when he is passively receiving impressions from without, certain ideas about himself and about life are implanted in his mind by those who surround him. In a right environment these early suggestions would be such as to give him confidence in himself. We may say that each individual has some strong point in his endowment, both mental and physical; the part of the parent (and also of the teacher) should be to find out what are these strong points in the mental and physical equipment of each child, in order that they may help the child to develop along those lines. It is through the approval given by the child's parents, teachers, and elders to his characteristic powers and through their encouragement to him in the following of his natural bent that he acquires self-confidence. He can then face the world knowing that he has some special gift which is of value to the world, whilst the whole trend of his education should be towards leading him to put this gift to a useful purpose.

The next point for the normal development of the power urge is that the training and education of the

child should be such as to make him face his own inferiority. Whilst every encouragement should be given to him to make use of his particular powers, yet he should not be allowed to shirk the doing of those things for which he has not the same natural capacity. To take a practical example, a boy or girl may be good at lessons, but not good at games, or vice versâ. More often he or she will be good at one game, perhaps tennis, but not good at another form of physical exercise, perhaps swimming; he or she may have a mathematical turn of mind, but no natural bent for history or languages. If a child is allowed to shirk those subjects which do not appeal to him, he grows up thinking that there are certain subjects which he cannot understand, and although the exemption may be a source of satisfaction to him at the time, yet in later life he will have a sense of inferiority in relation to those particular subjects. Probably there is not any subject that a child cannot master if he has it presented to him in a way that will reach his intelligence. Just as none of us would ever acquire an understanding of mathematics, of music, of grammar or of science if the intuitive perception of the laws governing each sphere of thought were not already in our minds as part of our native mental endowment, so it would be impossible for us to teach a child any branch of knowledge if we were not appealing to an intelligence fitted to receive such knowledge; only, in regard to some subjects, the child's innate intelligence seems to be buried more deeply than in regard to others, so that a stronger stimulus or a different kind of stimulus than the



ordinary is needed to make the unconscious knowledge available for the child's conscious mind.<sup>1</sup> Once, however, any subject which presents especial difficulties has been mastered, this knowledge, painfully acquired, will give the individual a peculiar self-confidence, the alternative to the sense of inferiority which would have resulted from his failure.

The third way in which the parent can help the child towards the necessary self-confidence for his right psychological development is by teaching him what are the true grounds for self-confidence. This is a question of character development rather than the realisation of any special mental powers or individual gifts. It is a question of giving the child a standard, by which he can judge himself, and either approve or condemn himself, apart from what other people think of him. This standard should be the standard of doing his best. It should be the standard of never shirking an effort, of never complaining of the price which has to be paid for the achievement of a thing which is worth doing. In the difficult moments of life, when the greatest demand is made on the capacities of the individual, the maintenance of a calm and balanced attitude depends not on success and the approval of others, but on the consciousness of having done one's best in a useful cause. Once such a standard has been instilled in the mind of the child, partly by precept, but more by the force of example and suggestion, he has a certainty within himself, a sense of

<sup>1</sup> In cases of mental defect the unconscious knowledge never becomes a subject for conscious formulation and understanding.

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assurance in living up to this standard, which will keep his attitude a balanced one both in regard to himself and in regard to other people. A lack of self-confidence means jealousy and distrust of others. The assurance of success, founded on the consciousness of fulfilling all the conditions which make for success, leaves room for a friendly, co-operative relationship with other people.

The extreme importance of these early years of teaching and training is seen when the child begins to strike out towards a more individual standpoint. When he reaches the age of adolescence, the time of dependence is over and he begins to make his own way in life. The point now is, how will he react to the new conditions and face his sense of coming responsibility? At this new stage all will depend on the mental attitude which has been already formed towards himself and towards the world. If this attitude is a right one, there should not be too great a gap between his way of facing life in the past and his power to face the greater difficulties and responsibilities incident on the maturing of his physical and mental powers. In every child there is already latent the adult; the power urge only awaits full expression until the ripening of the faculties of mind and body make expression possible. If the power urge is already healthily active, then at the stage of adolescence it should be possible for the boy or the girl so far to leave behind the infantile attitude as to reach out to the next phase of life in front. The infantile attitude represents the stage of dependence on the parents, when the sense of power was obtained

by association with the parents and by identification of the child's personality with theirs ("I am my father's daughter")<sup>1</sup>; the adult attitude implies a desire for the power which is founded on personal achievement and effort, implying the expenditure of energy without fear of consequences.

Up to the age of adolescence the child looks to his parents and elders for approval and assurance. From this time onwards the youth or the girl begins to shape his or her conduct in relation to members of the other sex of his or her own age, the instinctive disposition of self-display taking on a markedly sexual significance. The training of the child in his earlier years will now prove to have been of crucial importance. In seeking the approval of the other sex, which during the coming period is so great a stimulus to action, the young man or woman will naturally tend to exhibit those qualities of body or of mind which he (or she) has been taught from the earliest days to think admirable. If the instinctive life has run a free and natural course, there will be a display of all the highest qualities which the individual possesses, for the sexual urge normally implies a heightening of all those powers of body and of mind which will make for success in the sexual life and in regard to those objects which are implied in the sexual union. Physical qualities are of account from this point of view, and also that love of beauty and decoration (so strikingly shown in the animal world in the mating season) which seems to embody and to give proof of the vital impulse in the

<sup>1</sup> Words of a song.

individual, which on the physical side seeks expression in reproduction. Mental qualities, also, are a means of self-display, since qualities of intellect and wisdom afford a proof that the individual has an intelligent grasp of the meaning of situations and events and a desire to explore and track out new pathways in the unknown. Qualities of character also are manifestly bound up in the sexual urge. The individual who would react freely to the sexual instinct must be indifferent to danger and to the obstacles that are involved in the pursuit of his desire. There is a saying "Love will find a way" that expresses the ardour of character that is bound up in a true sexual reaction. But the person who is afraid of dangers and difficulties and who has been brought up to think only of saving his skin is incapable of that sublimity and heightening of personality which is the result of passion and strong desire. Such a person will never realise his power urge to the full unless through some extra stimulation in later life he is able to overcome the force of these negative suggestions.

We may look upon the sexual urge, therefore, whether this be the response to an actual sexual object or to the internal awakening accompanying the sense of potentiality in mind and body, as a stimulation to achievement and creative activity. The stimulation proceeds from the desire for self-display in response to the admiration and appreciation (primarily) of the other sex. In this phase of life of which we are thinking the energy seems to be massed about those nerve centres which

are connected with the individual's sexual rôle in life. The qualities which will be displayed will thus naturally be those which fit the individual for such a rôle, the more brilliant qualities of physical or mental endowment being balanced by such stable qualities of character as are the true proof of fitness for the exigencies of a life of responsibility.

The power urge thus develops normally with the maturing sexual life of the individual. In the next psychological phase we find it developing in relation to the parental instinct. Power is naturally bound up in the parental function: in the consciousness of the young lives dependent on the parents' exertions and of the young minds looking up to the parents with admiration and confidence. A sense of physical power is mingled with this attitude of the parent towards the child; but the true sense of power lies in the consciousness in the parent of superior knowledge and experience gained by effort in the past. It lies also in the constant practising of those ideals of conduct which the parent would impress upon the child. The parental urge is thus a stimulation to the exercise of the higher qualities of mind and character, by which the individual can maintain the true status of parent in relation to the child. In order to give assurance to the child, the parents must have that absolute self-confidence which belongs to those who habitually face reality and obey the laws of life without fear. This confidence in life they can pass on to their children, for whose sake they will redouble the efforts of the past. The parental urge is thus the strongest spur to achievement, the stimulus being

given by the faith and confidence placed in the parent by the child.

The next psychological phase is that corresponding to the stage of the individual's life when his (or her) children are no longer dependent on him and when his energies can pass out freely to a wider sphere. In later life he naturally tends to use his experience for public purposes. It is natural that civic life should engage the energies of the parent when his or her attention is no longer so exclusively occupied with the demands of a family. In public or civic activities the individual still has the psychological status of the parent, but his or her experience, self-confidence and knowledge are turned to the wider problems of civic or national life. The stimulus comes directly from the "herd," which looks to the psychological "leader," or parent, for help and encouragement. A younger generation will always gratefully accept the help of an older generation, if the minds of the older generation are in sympathy with their progressive aims.

If the individual, man or woman, makes a successful transition at each psychological stage to the stage of added responsibility, he or she will at each new stage find increased power. But in each stage the conditions under which true power is gained are the same, since it is only by the facing of difficulties and by the daring of situations where one is hampered by one's own inferiority that it is possible to build up a stable self-confidence. There never has been any royal road to power. Mount Olympus must be climbed slowly and painfully before anyone can

stand upon its heights and drink the nectar of the gods. But the heights may be gained by the persistent climber. This reaching up to the psychological status of "the parent" which is the central theme of individual psychology, is, moreover, the special problem of our own generation, spurred on by the deep experiences of the War. In drama and in the dramatic presentation of psychology we find that the description of "the parent" always rests on the fact that he is "free." Freud, in describing an imaginary primitive state of society, speaks of the two kinds of psychology, "that of the individual members of the group and that of the father, chief, or leader. The will of the individual" is "weak"; he does "not venture upon action," "but the father of the primal horde was free. His intellectual acts were strong and independent even in isolation, and his will needed no re-inforcement from others."<sup>1</sup> The Greek poet Sophocles, in the "Prometheus Bound," uses a similar expression of Jove (the god, the parent):—

"All things may be but this  
To dictate to the gods. There's one that's free,  
One only; Jove."

Swinburne, in his drama "Atalanta in Calydon," makes use of the same idea, based no doubt on his study of Greek tragedy: (in a dialogue between Althæa and her son Meleager):—

Althæa:

"How sayest thou these? what god applauds new  
things?"

<sup>1</sup> Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, pp. 91, 92,

Meleager:

"Zeus, who hath fear and custom under foot."

Althæa:

"But loves not laws thrown down and lives awry."

Meleager:

"But is not less himself than his own law."

The status of "the parent" or the "self-determined" individual is thus one of entire independence. He makes his own law and has "fear and custom under foot." He is not afraid of what others think of him, because he has his own standard, which he consistently maintains. He has "grown up," psychologically, that is, has become free of his bondage to the law or custom of other people. He thinks and acts for himself, not caring to take success or the good things of life as a benefit conferred on him by a kind Providence, but preferring to determine success by his own initiative and effort.

"Growing up" would perhaps be comparatively easy if there were not certain forces operating to keep the individual back. One of these is that fear of pain which the man or woman has who has been taught in childhood to think of pain as a judgment on wrong doing. In this case any suffering, mental or physical, is interpreted by the individual as a sign that he is doing wrong, instead of as the (often necessary) price which he has to pay for overcoming his fears and following his power urge. The more he may have indulged the infantile part of his personality during any past period of his life, the more "painful" will the effort be of living up to his adult personality. Yet he cannot achieve without



effort, this being the law of his existence. He must leave behind the attitude of self-preservation and the fear of consequences, before he can realise to the full the power of the self-directing personality.

The fear of wrong doing, which haunts the mind of the timid person brought up in early life to regard himself as inferior to others, is another of the negative influences which keep the individual back from reaching the more adult attitude towards life. The very fact that such a person feels that he is doing wrong if he acts independently of the opinion of others shows that his own judgment has never been emancipated from the "authorities" of his youth. He is unconsciously taking his standard of right and wrong from others, using the ethical standard of a past generation, or of those of his contemporaries who are less advanced than himself, as a criterion of his own conduct. Without knowing it, he is referring all his thoughts and actions to their judgment, as he knows it would be pronounced on his opinions and behaviour. He is not yet a law to himself. But he will not be "free" until he can shake off the influence of this unseen tribunal and think and act on his own independent judgment. It is necessary for each individual to make the transition from a passive to an active psychology and from a moral and intellectual dependence on others to an attitude of self-determination, before he can fully realise his power urge and react with creative force on his surroundings.

## CHAPTER VI

### PERSONALITY AND WILL

EVERY human being is endowed with self-consciousness, that is, with a consciousness of the self as distinct from the objects of the environment. With the progress of mental development there comes an increase in self-awareness, so that the individual becomes more aware of himself in contrast with his surroundings; he conceives himself also as standing in a dynamic relation to the environment and as acting upon and being acted upon by it. During the last century or so of mental evolution, particularly, we can trace a marked increase of self-consciousness, showing itself in the thought of the period as a more delicate perception of the self with its individual relationships and destiny.

The idea of the self is formed at a very early period in the history of the individual. It first takes shape as the result of suggestions from without, acting on the child according to the type of his temperament and mental disposition. Bound up with this idea of the self are certain emotional dispositions, which tend to be aroused in the mind under any circumstances which cause the individual to think of himself in relation to his environment, the nature of these emotions depending on the kind of idea he has formed about himself. If through the influences which surround him, coinciding with the

quality of his temperament, he has come to think of himself as "superior" and as capable of coping with different situations and events, he will respond to the presence of other people by the emotion of positive self-feeling (the emotional side of the instinct of self-assertion); or, when placed in front of a difficult situation, he will respond to the danger by the instinct of pugnacity. He will then form a mental picture of himself as acting on, instead of being acted upon by, his environment, and his attitude therefore will be a positive one. Freud remarks in relation to a certain type of myth among the ancients (of which an example is the declaration of the oracle to the Tarquini, that the one who should first "kiss the mother" would become ruler of Rome), "I have found that persons who considered themselves preferred or favoured by their mothers manifest in life that confidence in themselves and that firm optimism which often seems heroic and brings about real success by force."<sup>1</sup> There is no doubt that the child favoured by the mother and approved by the mother tends to grow up with this positive attitude towards the environment and to take the attitude of the conquering hero, who expects to win in life and who meets the world with a sense of certainty and self-confidence. This "firm optimism," as Freud says, helps to bring about "real success," for it tends towards keeping in predominance in the mind of the man or woman those positive emotions which, constantly aroused, result in a

<sup>1</sup> *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1913), p. 242, note.

release of energy for action in the external world. On the other hand, considering the matter still from the point of view of temperament and environment, the individual endowed with a timid temperament and brought up in an atmosphere in which his inability is emphasised and his abilities discouraged, tends to grow up thinking himself "inferior," his predominating emotions as he measures himself in relation to his environment being fear and negative self-feeling. As he always expects to be criticised and at the same time is afraid of being criticised, his attitude towards the world is a negative one. His energies will be concentrated on "making good" and and on finding security to compensate for his own inferiority, so that there will not be sufficient free energy at his disposal for acting on his environment.

From an examination of these two types of mentality, we obtain an idea of the meaning of a forceful personality. The forceful person is the one who has a clear conception of himself in relation to the environment and who has a strong intention or wish to impress himself on his surroundings. Possessed of gifts which give him a sense of power, he has also the optimism which goes with physical health and a buoyant temperament. Being forcible enough to be taken at his own valuation, he gains the additional impulse or desire which comes from favourable influences suggesting success. In such a case temperament and environment are in harmony with the power urge of the individual. Physical sensations spell success, whilst praise and appreciation from without give the mental stimulus.

When we come to consider the conditions of a strong will, we find that will-power belongs to strength of character rather than to force of personality. Personality is to some extent a native endowment, whilst strength of will can be cultivated by personal endeavour. Since, however, the person with strength of will tends more and more to impress himself upon the environment, he will probably in the cultivation of will-power gain a forcefulness of personality which was not in evidence before he set himself to work towards a goal. As he becomes more "positive" and begins to "act on" instead of being "acted upon" by his environment, he cannot fail to stand out against his surroundings and to make his strength felt among the more negative influences which surround him.

A strong will involves in the individual the possession of a definite purpose, which enables him to overcome all difficulties. In every act of will there is a choice made between two possible courses of action following a conflict between two opposing impulses. *Will* therefore implies a lack of harmony in the individual; but it also means that one part of the personality is stronger than the other opposing part of the personality. We cannot think of will except as exercised to overcome obstacles and difficulties, which arise from within even more than from without. The external difficulties of a situation would often require little exercise of will power, if it were not that opposition from without was reinforced by that part of the personality which acts as traitor within the gate. This part is the infantile

personality, which, if it has been allowed to persist unsublimated in the psychological history of the individual, will make itself felt whenever some special call for action falls athwart his sense of inferiority. There is no difficulty for him in acting when he feels superior to the situation and knows that he will make a "good show"; but when the situation is one in which he knows that he will not show to advantage, or even when he has to face a situation in which he is dependent on the uncertain quantity of the good-will of others, then all those bars to action are raised in his mind which characterise the functioning of the infantile personality. Fear, love of pleasure and ease, the desire to be dependent: all the passive elements of his nature arise to combat the power urge and to reduce him to that inactivity which belongs to self-love and marks the infantile attitude. Only by an act of will can these forces of inertia be overcome; only by a purpose which makes such a call on the instinctive energy that the individual is enabled to fight his way through doubts, hesitations and fears.

We must thus think of the will as a specialised form of energy, available when there is little stimulus from without and when the particular situation is one which calls up memories of fear or failure from the past. A situation difficult in itself may be faced with confidence if there is a stimulus sufficient to awaken an emotional drive which carries the individual on without heed of obstacles or dangers, such as a direct appeal to the sexual instinct, to the parental instinct, to the fighting instinct, or,

in some cases, to the instinct of self-display, arousing such abundant energy in the individual for the completion of the purpose connected with the instinctive urge that he loses all sense of fatigue, inability, or fear. Such a powerful stimulus from without makes the individual positive and active in relation to his environment.

The energy of the will, on the other hand, is an energy aroused by a stimulus from within. This stimulus depends on the possession of an adequate purpose or ideal, in the carrying out of which the whole of the adult personality is involved. Whilst this purpose must be of a nature to call up the instinctive energy for its fulfilment, it must also be of so permanent a character that it will operate as a stimulus when there is no immediate external stimulus to excite the instinctive dispositions. In fact, we may say that the will only functions in such situations as furnish the individual with a desire for inactivity, the special energy which enables him to overcome his inclination being the energy derived from an ideal which contains in itself the force for its fulfilment.

To understand how such an ideal comes to exist in the mind of the individual, we must go back to our conception of the life purpose as the desire of every human (or living) being for complete self-expression and the realisation of all his powers. We have seen that the highest moral powers (or the highest qualities of character) are realised by the individual when he reacts freely to certain stimuli, notably those which appeal to his sex instinct, his parental

instinct and his herd instinct. We have seen that apart from an immediate external stimulus these higher energies of the individual may also be aroused as the result of the awakening into activity of sentiments of love and attachment which he has formed for certain objects which have "attracted" his mind. Such sentiments, being connected on the conative side with impulses towards action of a positive and constructive kind in relation to those objects, find manifestation in conduct which agrees with a high conception of social behaviour.

Morally, however, the man would live from hand to mouth who had to wait for either a chance stimulus from the outside world or the awakening into activity of sentiments formed in the mind about the idea of particular objects before he felt the stirring within him of this higher psychic energy. We must credit the human being not only with the power of acting on the external world, but with the power of viewing objectively both his action and himself in action. Moreover, we see that he is able to view his actions from an intellectual and aesthetic standpoint, as well as looking at them from the point of view of their success or failure in attaining an immediate end. His ideal is formed as the result of what we may call this secondary appreciation of the value of his acts, a standard based not on success achieved in the external world, but on the rightness of his acts in relation to his inner sense of responsibility. There are types of action which all men estimate as beautiful, as right and as admirable, using an aesthetic standard as well as a practical



standard in appreciating them.<sup>1</sup> Acts of kindness, generosity, unselfishness or courage awake in the mind this sense of value apart from any success achieved by such conduct. The value of such actions is further enhanced if they are performed without any powerful stimulus from without. They then show that the individual has a perfect sense of relationship: that he finds in all his intercourse with his social world the same incentives to action that are supplied by objects that directly arouse the instinctive energy, that, therefore, he can be relied on in all exigencies of life, since he has an ideal of conduct which he applies to all circumstances without discrimination. He has formulated his ideal and made it the rule of his conscious life, because he has seen that the emotions and actions which he was capable of experiencing and performing under the effect of a powerful stimulus releasing the instinctive energy were the only emotions and actions which were wholly worthy of a human being.

An ideal of conduct, therefore, depends in the first place on the power of the individual to put before himself objectively a scheme of conduct and behaviour which satisfies his sense of rightness, fitness and beauty. In the second place, in order that the ideal may be an "adequate stimulus" of the will,<sup>2</sup> it must be connected in the mind of the individual with his own idea of himself and with his self-regarding sentiment. There must be

<sup>1</sup> In this connection, see W. McDougall, *Social Psychology* (1923), p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> See J. A. Hadfield, *Psychology and Morals* (1925), Chapter XI.

the emotional drive of "self-feeling" before the ideal can be put continuously into practice. We have seen how important in determining our characteristic reactions to experience is the idea we have of ourselves and the feelings we have about ourselves. Our positive self-feeling, when we know ourselves to be superior to a situation, supplies the energy for the positive action by which we can realise our best powers. The individual who has perceived by the light of his reason and his aesthetic sense turned on, as it were, to his experience the value of a certain course of action, tends to link up his idea of himself with his ideal. He finds again from reflection on his experience that he can only gain an impregnable position of superiority, a permanent self-confidence, by living up to his ideal. He depends for positive self-feeling on acting in a way that he considers worthy of himself as a human being. His pride and self-respect are involved in carrying out his ideal of social conduct; they furnish a perpetual supply of emotional energy, which, when directed to the overcoming of obstacles, functions as the special energy of the will.

The reasoning by which the individual links himself up with his ideal and makes it his rule of conduct is partly conscious and partly unconscious. There is fully in his conscious mind, for instance, the idea that he is bound to act unselfishly in order to act in a way that is worthy of himself. His idea of himself and his ideal are linked so closely in his mind that consciously he has a "high ideal of himself." A further line of reasoning is for the most part entirely

unconscious. If, according to his ideal, the individual acts unselfishly under circumstances when there is no strong stimulus from outside to awaken altruistic feelings, he nevertheless experiences a repercussion from his action on himself for which he did not consciously reckon, namely, a response in the form of admiration, gratitude, or appreciation from other people as the result of the free expenditure of his time, energy or skill bestowed in unselfish service. Such a response will act directly as a spur to achievement and self-expression, thus showing that at the back of his action was the unconscious desire to find an incentive to added self-realisation. Even if he were to perform a brave or unselfish action under circumstances in which it was impossible that the knowledge of it should ever reach the outside world, yet no doubt he would still receive a psychic reward in the heightening of positive self-feeling and in the added self-reliance which would result from his action, showing again that there was an unconscious motive at work in his mind, namely, the desire to realise further his own individuality and power of self-determination.

This power of self-determination in relation to an ideal is far removed from the childish attitude of appreciating one's self on the ground of judgments passed by other people or of taking a standard of conduct ready-made from the opinion of others. Such a point of view is natural to the child, who understands right and wrong through the medium of the approval or disapproval of his elders. His parents impress upon him a certain code of conduct,

which he applies to his life 'as a standard of what he "ought" and "ought not" to do. When the individual grows up and reaches self-determination, he finds that there is nothing he "ought" to do, but certain things which he "must" do, the concentrated energy of his life purpose, working behind his ideal, driving him on perforce to self-expression on the higher plane. He has unconsciously sublimated his energy, in that he is no longer dependent on external stimuli appealing directly to his instincts for the arousing of his energy, but is able to direct his energy to ends of his own choosing under the stimulus of his ideal. We are told that certain plants which are subtly responsive to the rays of the sun show a weakening in vibration when a cloud passes over the face of the sun; an external stimulus, such as love or friendship, similarly awakens with its warmth the energy and vitality of the human being: but the individual who keeps steadily before him the ideal which makes of his life a harmony and a unity has within himself the stimulus by which the necessary energy for his purpose is released.

A strong will implies certain mental characteristics in the individual. A steady power of volition depends on the fact that the individual is able to form a clear picture of himself in relation to his ideal and to keep this picture constantly in front of him. Through this means he is able to exercise an effective power of choice. When he finds surging up in himself the emotions which belong to a lower type of reaction—such emotions as fear, or anger, or jealousy, which are below the social plane—he is

able to control these emotions and to act on the higher level. He is not driven by emotion to action which is not in accordance with his ideal. He rejects the first impulse and acts *as if* he were animated by the higher emotion; so that his feelings are brought into accord with his considered action. It is impossible to speak kindly, to look kindly and to put kindness into the voice without feeling kindly: the infantile emotion of fear or jealousy can thus be turned into a social emotion more worthy of the adult. Through the function of the will the individual is able to control the instinctive reactions and by a reversal of the purely instinctive process to act in conformity with an ideal, afterwards experiencing the emotion which corresponds with the action. He finds that to gain strength of will he must exercise the will, that is, he must consistently use his power of choosing how he will act and of acting according to his choice.

Since we usually confine the term "ideal" to a code of moral conduct, we must use another term to express the end towards which men and women work in connection with their personal ambition and desire for success. This goal might be spoken of as the individual's purpose in life. This purpose, if steadily pursued, also calls for a constant exercise of will power. There are moments when a man's energy may flag, when he becomes overwhelmed by fears and the sense of difficulty in attaining his end, when he is without any external stimulus in the way of help, co-operation or encouragement from other people; he then needs a sheer exercise of

will-power to hold to his aim and negative his fears. No doubt his ideal helps him here, for he would be ashamed to acknowledge defeat under the pressure of difficulty; but it is an ideal in the form of pride and self-respect rather than in the shape of any obligation to other people. It is obvious, however, that the more useful his aim is, the more his ambition is connected with work for the common good, the more stimulus there will be for carrying out his purpose and achieving success. In fact, with all of us there are moments when ambition as a source of energy hangs fire, so that we need to reanimate our purpose by thinking of the happiness we can bestow or the inspiration which we can give to other people. The "positive" person is the person who is using all his or her best energies in work that is socially progressive and useful. Such a person is not likely to lack will-power when the call for effort comes.

A strong will, as we have seen, implies conflict and a victory over opposing impulses. Since the real difficulties come, not from without, but from within, the necessity for a strong will lies in a lack of harmony within the ego. A strong character depends on a constant exercise of will-power in overcoming those temptations towards reactions of an infantile type to which persons are prone who have a tendency to division in the ego. We therefore see clearly the difference between the naturally forceful personality and the strong character. In the forceful personality (as such) there is no division in the self. The temperament (based on a strong or healthy physical constitution) is one of hopefulness

and buoyancy, without the haunting fears that accompany physical inferiority. The mental attitude is one of self-confidence, with trustfulness as regards other people, giving the individual a free opening for the display of his best powers. Such an individual has a better start in life, but who shall say whether the self-confidence acquired through the constant play of will in relation to an ideal will not stand the test of reality more surely than the self-confidence based on natural "superiority" rather than on the facing of one's own "inferiority"? When the conquest has been gained and self-reliance has been earned by the individual as the result of numberless acts of choice, then the person of strong character will stand out also as the forceful personality. No longer having to devote so much psychic energy to the fighting of his fears and inferiorities, he will be free to impress himself on the environment and to make full use of the mental superiority that he possesses.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SELF IN RELATION TO SOCIETY

#### ADJUSTMENT OF THE CONSERVATIVE AND PROGRESSIVE FORCES IN THE MIND

IT is impossible in psychology to think of one "self" apart from other "selves." All through life, from earliest infancy onwards (to say nothing of the pre-natal condition), each individual self is being acted upon by other selves and at the same time, at each moment of contact, is also awakening an emotional response in the minds of other individuals. Each individual can only conceive of himself objectively in relation to other persons. The highest ideal a man might visualise could only be put into effect in a personal environment and the finest powers of his mind would remain unrealised apart from a social stimulus. Who could imagine a hermit producing a great work of art? In cutting himself off from his fellows, the recluse cuts himself off also from the stimulus which quickens and awakens the sense of beauty and inspires the man or woman to embody that beauty in an objective form (such as music, painting or poetry). The stimulus is provided by the approval and appreciation of those persons who surround the individual and who make up his social world; their love and admiration are the forces needed to draw out his



powers to the full and to supply the effectual motive for his self-expression.

It is essential, therefore, in order that any individual may realise his powers to the full, that he should feel himself one with the social community and that there should be no bars of unfriendliness or hostility between his mind and the minds of those persons among whom he lives. He should be able to think of himself as one with his social world, even with the lowest members of it. Who shall say what stimulus may come from the smile of some outcast from society, who thinks that for once he has found a friend? In the mind of the "humanised" man or woman there is no one "beyond the pale"; the very outcasts appear as products of a state of society in which he or she lives and for which, therefore, each shares the responsibility. The truly socialised man recognises no division of interests among the different classes of society, for he sees all human beings as animated by the same desires and the same needs. He knows, too, that for each one these needs and desires can only be satisfied within the circle of a social community and that this essential unity of human nature is the effectual bond uniting society.

If we think of some of the purposes which are served by society or "the herd," we shall understand more clearly the nature of the relationship which binds the members of the herd to one another. The primitive "herd" was an organisation of individuals existing primarily for the purpose of mutual protection. The members of a clan hunted together,

fought together and by means of organisations such as the "blood feud" afforded one another mutual protection in cases of strife within their own ranks. Organised in a community, men were able to acquire property and to hold it in safety; fortified by wealth and possessions they could marry and bring up families. It was found by actual experience and experiment that the essential needs of humanity could only be satisfied through co-operation and organisation. Modern society is founded on this co-ordinated "herd," which originally came into being to ensure the safety and progress of individuals who as single units were defenceless before the dangers of a primitive existence.

Such co-operative action necessarily entailed a modification of behaviour on the part of the individuals organised in the society. We can scarcely conceive of human beings as at any time living entirely apart or in single families, for we see even in the higher animals a tendency to form societies for the purposes of ensuring safety and obtaining the means of existence. We can, however, compare the character and behaviour of human beings as organised within a community with the character and behaviour shown by them in relation to all persons outside their community, and through this comparison we can see how much of human behaviour depends on the fact that man is social by nature, so that whether he owes allegiance to a large or a small society he is influenced in his thinking, feeling and acting by his relationship to the members of that society.

If we go back in mind to a more primitive state of society, we can realise more clearly how essentially different are the reactions of the individual towards the members of his own society from his reactions towards all those outside his own society. When the individual member of the primitive herd recognised one of his own herd, who shared with him the common name and worshipped with him the common god, his reaction to that other was the reaction of a friend. He would think of the other as one having mutual interests with him and as one to whose advantage it would be to co-operate with him. The tendency of both would therefore be to unite in common action. There would be no barrier to their co-operation, because of their consciousness of common interests. To anyone outside the individual's own herd, however, he would react with hostile feelings, either with fear or anger, as towards someone who necessarily wished to thwart him, to get the better of him, to deprive him of his possessions and probably even of his life.

Based on this generally friendly and responsive attitude which characteristically marks the behaviour of the members of "the herd" in the presence of one another, we can observe certain specific mental reactions which are no less characteristic of herd behaviour.<sup>1</sup> If we think of any number of persons of the same herd gathered together for the purpose of united action, we can see how the minds of these persons must necessarily influence one another. We are able to realise how an emotion of

<sup>1</sup> See W. McDougall, *Social Psychology* (1923), p. 90.

fear or anger directed against a common foe or an emotion of admiration and enthusiasm for a popular hero can run through a crowd, being communicated from one mind to another and gathering strength in its passage. We can see how this emotion will give the driving force for that united action by which the safety or the victory of the community is ensured. This common emotion is called "sympathy," literally a feeling of one mind with another.

Not only the passage of emotion but also the rapid transit of ideas is facilitated when the herd is assembled together for common action. On such occasions the mind of each member of the herd is particularly open to receive ideas from the other members, especially from the leader of the herd. Only by this "unanimity," or oneness of mind, can the united action be secured which preserves the safety of the herd. Such action of one mind upon another is called "suggestion" and is best illustrated in the relation between the members of the herd and the one who at the moment takes the place of "leader." This leader is presumably one who is older or wiser than the other members of the herd and who is therefore invested in their eyes with prestige. His commands thus come to the members of the herd with the compelling force of suggestion. Whether it be in battle or in any other form of corporate activity, the members of the herd will accept the commands of their leader as something absolutely right. They will sink their own intelligence and will act entirely on his initiative, knowing that their only chance of safety or success lies in

adopting and acting on his forceful ideas. Thus we can see that "suggestibility" lies in this instinctive tendency in the individual members of the herd to submit themselves to any one who will take the place of "leader" and to accept his ideas as necessary for their safety and well-being.

A third tendency which marks the members of the "herd" when they are together and which, like suggestion, is most noticeable in the relation of the individual members to their "leader" is the tendency towards imitation. The individual's tendency to copy the actions of other members of the herd, especially of one who has prestige or authority, also helps to ensure the common action which is the object of the "herd" organisation.

These characteristics of human beings as social units or "members of the herd" mark the members of a society even when they are not gathered together into an army or into a crowd. Whenever two or three persons of the same society (that is, of a group whose members have vital interests in common) are assembled together, it is usual for one unconsciously to assume the place of leader and for the others to defer to his authority; also, whenever any number of the same group or society are together, a quick transit of emotions, ideas and actions will take place between the members of that group, the impulse being given by the leader and the emotion of each separate member of the group being re-inforced by the emotion of the others.

This mutual influence of mind upon mind within

the group or "herd" explains the strength of the bond that unites the members of a society. As herd member the individual cannot help being affected by the emotions, ideas and actions of the others of his group. The purpose of the herd could only be secured by this mutual answering of mind to mind within the herd, making possible the common action which ensures the preservation of the herd. The response of mind to mind within the group is the inevitable necessity arising from the course that human evolution has taken, by which the defenceless individual was enabled to find safety and means of subsistence through his membership of the herd.

The group organisation is designed to secure human progress as well as to meet the elementary needs of existence. Mental development, as we have seen, demands the stimulus of one mind upon another in order that the powers of each may be brought to full fruition. Within each group organisation there is the hierarchy of the leaders and the rank and file of the followers. The leaders of the group find their stimulus in the admiration and appreciation of their followers; the followers find it in the approval of their leaders. Thus in any group there is a constant interplay of mind upon mind, furnishing a mental atmosphere in which the powers of each individual are stimulated to the full.

So strong is the bond that thus necessarily unites the members of a society to one another and to their leader that at first sight it might seem impossible

for any individual to escape from this enmeshing influence of herd suggestion, so powerfully does it act to keep him one in thought and feeling with the herd. The conservative element of the mind corresponds with this strong attachment to the herd on which safety and means of development depend for the individual. Only by estimating fully the power of this attachment can we appreciate properly the force that is acting on the other side. As long as the individual thinks, feels and acts in unison with the herd, he is secure; he has the assurance that comes from the knowledge that the rightness of his thought and action is confirmed by the fact that others are thinking and acting like himself. He is carrying on a tradition from the past, hallowed by the wisdom of his forefathers and sanctioned by the authority of the leaders of his own day. He is fortified by law and custom, which embody the decisions of past generations and which give a sense of security, because they have been tried and tested and have been found to ensure some measure of safety for the social commonwealth. It is natural for the individual to fall in with the opinions and actions of his immediate group or groups (e.g. college, church, profession, or social group), because in this way he gains a comfortable sense of backing and moral support; it is also natural to him to acquiesce in the order imposed by the larger social unit or state, because the power wielded by the latter gives him a feeling of material security. In both cases he gives his allegiance in return for the support and protection afforded by the social organisation.

As long as the individual is thus in harmony with the group or groups which give him security, sharing the common emotions and opinions of his group, he enjoys the inner sense of rightness and consciousness of reinforcement of energy which comes to the individual in group action.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, if he thinks or feels in a way that is in opposition to his group he suffers from an acute sense of mental isolation which is almost a physical pain in its intensity. Such mental suffering is the resistance raised within the individual's own self to any independent action apart from his group, which is far more painful in its nature than any resistance that comes to him from without. Owing, as he does, his sense of security to his place within the group, he feels unconsciously that he is doing "wrong" when he breaks away in any independent thought or action. He thinks of himself as he knows the other members of his group will think of him (for the majority of a group are bound to resent the action of any individual members who break away from the common tradition and lessen their feeling of security), and so makes of himself a criminal, a pariah and an outcast, suffering all the mental pain and loneliness of the exile. He has now to tread new paths of experience, which are not yet hallowed by the approval of acknowledged leaders or made safe by familiarity. No longer "backed" by the opinions of his group, he has to judge for himself and to take all the risks, while the more in the past he

<sup>1</sup> See W. Trotter, *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* (1919), p. 40.



has been in the habit of reinforcing his own self-approval by the approval of others, the more will he feel the pain of "separation from the herd."

In order, however, that society as a whole may progress, it is necessary that there should always be found some independent spirits within any given social group, who are prepared to sacrifice their peace and security for the sake of freedom and mental advancement. As a whole, society must necessarily remain bound by the thoughts and customs of the past, which give it stability and ensure safety for its members. Yet new ideas of any social value will gradually work as a leaven within the social fabric, until the time comes when the revolutionary conceptions of the individual "fanatic" or reformer become the accepted ideas of society as a whole. The progress of a society is thus ensured through the initiative of its individual members. What we have now to consider is the motive which is strong enough to make any man or woman break away from the bonds of thought and custom in which as members of society they are held, and to brave the resistances which arise from within against any independent action, as well as the criticism which comes from without. Such a motive can only be found in the possibility of a great enhancement of the ego as the result of the unconventional line of thought or action pursued by the individual. Only some great illumination, some great assurance, some great heightening of the "ego-consciousness," to be won at the cost of breaking away from tradition and from the wisdom of the past, will give the man or woman sufficient

impetus to carry them on to the new goal, beyond any point which has yet been reached in the annals of human experience. On the way to this goal the individual will be tormented by many doubts and fears, which are the payment demanded of him for his advance by the conservative forces within himself. It is only when he has come to give full honour to those very conservative forces which seem to hold him back, but on which in reality depend his own safety and that of society, that he will attain to a harmony of the progressive and conservative forces within his mind.

The danger for the pioneer, for the person who advances beyond the herd, is that he may show a critical and resentful attitude towards those who have not the courage or the understanding to advance as far as he. He may despise the "herd" and pass judgment on society for its hopelessly low standard of intelligence. In order to keep a balanced attitude he needs to remember that there is no such thing as a "private good," that the discoveries he makes for himself must be of equal advantage for others, and that it is only in making them available for others that he learns their full value for himself. He must keep undiminished his goodwill towards the herd, because he needs the stimulus of its approval and admiration to reach the furthest goal of which he himself is capable. No individual can afford to dispense with the pressure of public opinion, for although his own judgments may be beyond those of the herd, yet he can live up to his own code more easily when

social requirements give point to his ideal. The pioneer especially needs to preserve this tolerant attitude towards society, because he always tends to value progress more than safety. He has to learn, therefore, not to ignore the value of that conservative element which gives the stability needed for social development, nor too much to undervalue the salutary social effect of public opinion.

Some interesting illustrations of the problem of reconciling the progressive and conservative elements of the mind may be taken from Greek literature. Here we find in dramatic form the presentation of the two forces in human nature, each of which has to be recognised and allowed its place in a society which is to give anything of value to the world. In the plays of Æschylus, particularly, we find the adventurous, daring action of some inspired hero or heroine thrown up against the background of tradition and custom by which the safety of the state is guarded. No doubt the poet was unconsciously attempting in his dramas to work out a harmony for his own mind. We see the hero, who for some great prize has sinned against convention, usually at the bidding of a god, paying dearly for his crime, yet in the end being publicly justified in his action, usually again through the intervention of a god, and making his peace with the established order. A good example of such a history is the drama of Orestes.<sup>1</sup> At the bidding of Apollo, Orestes slays

<sup>1</sup> Told in the *Choephoræ* and the *Eumenides* of Æschylus, which with the *Agamemnon* make up the poet's great dramatic trilogy. My translations are taken from J. S. Blackie, *The Lyrical Dramas of Æschylus* (Everyman's Library).

his mother Clytemnestra, who had murdered her husband Agamemnon, father of Orestes and Electra. The brother and sister deliberately plot the death of their mother to save their father's house from ruin. The choice for them is:—

“ Now, or, plunged in deep perdition,  
Agamemnon's house sinks low,  
Or the hearth with hope this day  
Shall blaze, through all the ransomed halls,  
And the son his father's wealth  
Shall win, and with his sceptre sway.”

Orestes, as “the godlike son of Agamemnon,” must slay his mother as the condition of avenging his father and entering into his possessions and power; or, in other words, we may say, using the expression psychologically, of “growing up.” The deed is done and celebrated in the choral hymn:—

“ Lift up your heads; from prostration untimely  
Ye halls of the mighty be lifted sublimely!  
All-perfecting Time shall bring swift restitution,  
And cleanse the hearth pure from the gory pollution,  
Now the day dawns clear.  
And blithely shall welcome them Fortune the fairest,  
The brother and sister, with omens the rarest;  
Each friend of this house show the warm love thou  
bearest,  
Now the day dawns clear!”

But before this happy consummation is reached Orestes finds himself pursued by the Furies, who come as his mother's avengers.

“ To Hades' gloomy portal,  
To chase the guilty mortal.”

“For the Furies work readily  
Vengeance unsparing,  
Surely and steadily  
Ruin preparing.  
Dark crimes strictly noted,  
Sure memoried they store them;  
And, judgment once voted,  
Prayers vainly implore them.”

Only after many wanderings, pursued by these avengers of blood, and through the performing of many rites and ceremonies for purification, does Orestes finally escape from the vengeance of the Furies by the aid of the goddess Pallas Athena and make good his title to his father's kingdom.

Another favourite story in Greek legend, introduced by Æschylus into the “Prometheus Bound,” is the story of Io, daughter of Inachus, king of Argos, who was loved by Jupiter. She aroused the envy of Hera, spouse of Jupiter, to escape whose wrath Jupiter changed Io into a heifer. Hera sent “one of the furies, or rather a malicious insect”<sup>1</sup> to torment her, and goaded by this insect pest Io wandered over the world. The chorus in the play, representing the conservative attitude of mind which fears for a mortal the addresses of a god, give vent to their feelings as follows:—

“Wise was the man, most wise,  
Who in deep-thoughted mood conceived, and first  
In pictured speech and pregnant phrase declared  
That marriage, if the Fates shall bless the bond,  
Must be of like with like;

<sup>1</sup> These words, which are significant, are quoted from *Lemprière's Classical Dictionary*.

And that the daughters of an humble house  
Shun tempting union with the pomp of wealth  
And with the pride of birth."

The Antistrophe of the Chorus continues:—

"Never, O! never may Fate,  
All-powerful Fate which rules both gods and men,  
See me approaching the dread Thunderer's bed,  
And sharing marriage with the Olympian king,  
An humble Ocean-maid!  
May wretched Io, chased by Hera's wrath,  
Unhusbanded, unfriended, fill my sense  
With profitable fear."

Yet Io, having reached the banks of the Nile and having been changed back by Jupiter into her natural form, became by Jupiter the mother of Epaphos, who was worshipped as a god at Memphis. Afterwards she married the king of Egypt and became the ancestress of a famous race (kings of Egypt and also kings of Argos). After her death she received divine honours and was worshipped as the goddess Isis. Her fate thus justified both her high alliance and her sufferings. Yet the poet could not have been satisfied to vindicate her union with Jove, unless he had pictured her first as "scourged by the wrath of Heaven's relentless Queen"; in this way she paid her tribute to the goddess who guarded the sanctity of the marriage tie.

The story of Hypermnestra, descendant of Io, contains the same theme in a different setting. Hypermnestra was one of the fifty daughters of Danaus, who reigned in Egypt conjointly with his brother Ægyptus. Ægyptus had fifty sons, who

sought their cousins in marriage. To save his daughters from the unwelcome attentions of these suitors, Danaus sailed with them to Argos, and there the "suppliant band" sought protection on the Argive soil which had been Io's home before her wanderings. At the commencement of the play (*The Suppliants*<sup>1</sup>), the Danaïdes set out the cause of their flight to "Jove, the suppliant's high protector":—

"From the land that fringes Syria,  
Land divine, in flight we came,  
Not by public vote forth-driven,  
Not by taint of blood divorced  
From our native state, but chastely  
Our abhorrent foot withdrawing  
From impure, ungodly wedlock  
With Ægyptus' sons, too nearly  
Cousined with ourselves. For wisely,  
This our threatened harm well-weighting,  
Danaus, our sire, prime counsellor,  
And leader of our sistered band,  
Timely chose this least of sorrows  
O'er the salt sea wave to flee;  
And here on Argive soil to plant us,  
Whence our race its vaunted spring  
Drew divinely, when great Jove  
Gently thrilled the brize-stung heifer  
With his procreant touch, and breathed  
God-like virtue on her womb."

The Danaïdes pray to Jove as "guardian of all holy homes." All the forces that make for safety and respectability are thus brought on to their side. They then make their plaint to the king of Argos

<sup>1</sup> Æschylus, transl. Blackie as above, note 1, p. 95.

to shield them from their pursuing cousins, after having first been instructed by their careful father as to the attitude they shall take:—

“The bold tongue eschewing,  
With sober fronted face and quiet eye  
Your tale unfold.”

The king takes the maidens under his protection and once again Danaus addresses them:—

“This only,  
Your father’s word remember. More than life  
Hold a chaste heart in honour.”

Here the play of Aeschylus (*The Suppliants*) comes to an end, the two sequel plays not having come down to us. The end of the story was that Danaus, unwilling to lead the Argives into a war, instructed his daughters to yield to their suitors and then each to murder her husband on the marriage night. This command they carried out, in order to escape from the hated yoke, with the exception of Hypermnestra, who disobeyed her father and saved the life of her husband. She was persecuted by her father, who also pursued her husband, Lynceus, with unremitting fury. Finally a reconciliation took place through the intervention of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, with the result that Lynceus was recognised by Danaus as his successor. By following her power urge instead of obeying the commands of her father, Hypermnestra thus became “the mother of a royal race in Argos.”

One more example may be taken from the most famous story in Greek legend, the story of Helen. To the Greek mind Helen evidently represented that



incalculable element in human life which makes men break through and defy all the restraints and safeguards of the social system for the prize of beauty. Helen herself was of divine birth, being the daughter of Jupiter by Leda. Her beauty was so great that from her earliest years she introduced strife into her surroundings. At the age of ten she was carried off by Theseus, from whom she was rescued by her brothers Castor and Pollux. Afterwards she had thirty-one suitors, all famous princes of Greece. From among her suitors Helen chose Menelaus, brother of Agamemnon, king of Argos and Mycenæ, the other suitors binding themselves by oath to defend her against any attempt to snatch her from the arms of her husband. But the disturbing factor of Helen's beauty had already made itself felt in Troy. The goddess Venus had promised Helen as wife to Paris, son of Priam, king of Troy, in return for his award to her of the apple as the prize to the fairest among the goddesses. Paris then proceeded on a false pretence to Sparta, where he was kindly received by Menelaus. Afterwards, during the absence of Menelaus in Crete, Paris fulfilled his destiny by carrying off Helen to Troy. The result was the Trojan War, lasting ten years and entailing the most unheard of losses on either side. Finally the Greeks took Troy, and in spite of all the lamentations which are put by poets into the mouths of the Greek "stay-at-homes" for the havoc of life caused by this war for a woman's sake, we can discern the undercurrent of exaltation which all Greeks felt at this great feat of arms to which the beauty of Helen

had inspired them. The news was blazed by beacons from Mount Ida in Asia Minor to the "halls of the Atridæ" at Mycenæ. The herald, who in the "Agamemnon" of Æschylus brings the news to Clytemnestra, the wife of the leader of the Greek host, breaks out:—

"Henceforth to each harsh memory of the past  
Farewell! we who survive this long-drawn war  
Have gains to count that far outweigh the loss.  
Well may we boast in the face of the shining sun,  
O'er land and sea our winged tidings wafting,  
THE ACHÆAN HOST HATH CAPTURED TROY; and now  
On the high temples of the gods we hang  
These spoils, a shining grace, there to remain  
An heritage for ever."<sup>1</sup>

As to the two chief personages in the drama, the Greek poets, telling the story from the point of view of a Greek epic, were able to make their concession to the conservative element in themselves and in their hearers by picturing the disasters that overcame Troy as the result of the defiance by Paris of all the courtesies and decencies of life and by including Paris in the ruin that overwhelmed his country. Helen, being a Greek, they treated more kindly, but they put off her final vindication to the next world. The story is that she returned to Sparta with Menelaus, that after his death she was driven out by his illegitimate sons and that, arriving in Rhodes, she was murdered by Polyxo of Rhodes, whose husband had been killed in the Trojan War. The nemesis is

<sup>1</sup> J. S. Blackie, *The Lyrical Dramas of Æschylus* (Everyman's Library), p. 59.

completed by the fact that the murder was carried out by the attendants of Polyxo, *disguised as furies*. We find, however, that after her death she was honoured as a goddess and that the Spartans built a temple to her, where deformed women came to receive the gift of beauty.

The Greeks, having thus arrived at a stage of self-consciousness when they could view themselves objectively, seeing themselves as possessed of all that ardour of character which won their national greatness against the background of social institutions which they had built up and which embodied their civilisation, were able to put into poetic and dramatic form their sense of the need for the counterbalancing play of the progressive and conservative elements in their mental and social life. On the outward surface their dramas express an extremely full recognition of all those social institutions which offer a safeguard and a restraint against the licence of individual behaviour. But underneath the conservatism of these pious utterances, we find the second theme expressed, the necessity for that individual daring of consequences in the face of social opinion and custom by which great deeds are accomplished and freedom won. These braver mortals are generally pictured as instigated by a god; probably the poets made this concession to propriety for the sake of the more conservative minds of their hearers. But once called to the more daring part, the hero had to take the full consequences of his acts. The poets may have thought again that this would serve to deter those lovers of ease, who would have

liked the sense of power belonging to the more independent action, but who lacked the moral courage to carry through that action to a successful conclusion. The only hero whom they considered worthy to be thus chosen was the hero who could face the "furies" raised up in himself as the result of his attempt to wrest the higher rewards offered by life and destiny. They saw that such a hero, having once gained complete confidence in himself and his own independent standard, would be able to give full and necessary recognition to the other element in himself, the element making for safety, and so would be capable of reaching harmony through the reconciliation of the two forces.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

#### I. FEARS AND REPRESSIONS

IN treating of Individual Psychology it is impossible to ignore altogether the subject of abnormal psychological development. When we take into consideration the intricacy of modern social life and the numerous and difficult adjustments which the individual is called upon to make to his surroundings, it will not surprise us that some twists and turns in mental development should mark the psychic life of many individual men and women of the present day, especially of those who have to face a difficult environment with a faulty heredity. The higher the individual is in the social scale, the more intricate are the social adjustments which he has to make: the lower he is in the ranks of social life, the more difficult are the industrial conditions he has to face. The heredity, or the essential quality of the mental stamina with which he faces life, is not a matter of class, as far as class means a division in the social and industrial system; it is, however, a matter of class as far as poor conditions of living, below a certain minimum standard, make for a poor physical and mental constitution. But as regards the nature of the psychological problem which every human being has to solve, and the lines, right or wrong, of

psychological development in each case, we can make no distinction of class or social rank whatever. All human beings are concerned with the same problem: the problem of giving full expression to their life urge. The laws of development for every human being are also the same; for in each case there must be the "growing up," the leaving behind of the infantile, before any man can attain to the full realisation of his powers. Since in every human being the psyche works chiefly through the Unconscious, it follows that the individual in his conscious mind is not always aware of the meaning of the urge which impels him onward, nor of the nature of the goal towards which he is striving. Blindly, by instinct, he responds to the objects which surround him, according as to whether they will help or hinder him in his life purpose. But in the unconscious depths from which the psyche plans the path of destiny, there is no uncertainty. All the instinctive acts of which the individual does not know the reason are related to his life purpose. He strives of necessity for self-realisation: that is, for the full expression of that measure of life force and power which he possesses.

Thus all human beings are striving for the same ends, but they are not all striving on the same level. If we think of the psyche or soul as a fragment of the universal creative life force, which has become individualised in a human self or ego, we must recognise that only in one way can the life urge in the individual be perfectly expressed, that is in free creative activity. The different levels of striving

(and the consequent different levels of success in achieving creative activity) correspond to the differences in *quality* which mark one individual self as compared with another. While the crowns of destiny are won only by striving, the innate capacity for striving in one individual seems to be greater than the capacity in another. Probably this relative strength of the ego for striving is related in the first place to the native mental endowment of the individual: that is to say, the desire for self-expression in any man or woman must depend partly on how much the individual has to express. Thus if he or she is highly endowed with intelligence, either on the intellectual side, the emotional side or the practical side, he or she will have a correspondingly strong impulse to strive to overcome weakness within and difficulties without, in order to attain full opportunity of self-expression. But, further, it would seem that the very capacity or power for striving seems to be greater in one individual than in another. Some human beings are marked by a mental laziness or feebleness, which shows itself in the persistence of the infantile attitude towards life; although there is the desire for power in such a man or woman, there is also the wish to enjoy power without so much striving as is necessary for the full development of the individuality.

It is in this weakness of mental fibre that we find the predisposing tendency towards abnormal psychological development. Such poverty in the mental constitution is probably always related to physical weakness or defect, from which the individual suffers

as a matter of heredity. At the same time this psychic weakness or neurotic tendency usually co-exists with a high degree of mental capacity in other directions. Therefore a dogging fear constantly besets the steps of the constitutional neurotic. His gifts and talents give him a strong power urge; at the same time, in order to satisfy this power urge, he will need to make that effort against which the weaker part of him rebels. It is as if the head and the body were of gold and the legs and the feet of clay. The underlying weakness (which on the physical side we may relate especially to an easily exhausted store of nervous energy) makes for fear and self-distrust: the power urge would drive the individual on to great deeds and fine achievement: between the two an eternal conflict is generated, which exhausts the physical frame. Yet occasionally from that conflict the victorious power urge issues forth in a burst of creative energy to astonish the world.

Abnormal psychological development is thus conditioned on one side by bad heredity: that is, the easily exhausted physical energy and the low nervous vitality which predispose towards emotional reactions of fear and subjection. On the other hand, the conditioning factor of a faulty development is a bad environment. We must remember that there is a strong tendency, as a matter of psychic conditions, for bad heredity and bad environment to go together. The bad heredity means that the weakness in the physical and mental strain comes to the individual from his parents; that they, like himself,



were imbued with constitutional fear and self-distrust. But since in a child's life the parents form the most important feature of his surroundings, a bad environment is already given by the mental characteristics of such parents. Thus on the child suffering constitutionally from a sense of fear and inferiority, with a resulting tendency to social mal-adjustment, all those influences will play which come from parents tainted with the same weakness; parents who, themselves, are trying to gain security, and who, themselves, are desirous of winning power by the easy road which will save them from ever having to face their own inferiority. We see thousands of parents with these characteristics to-day. The nineteenth century seems to have given birth to an ease-loving generation: possibly the result of a national prosperity which allowed men to rest on their oars and to reap the benefit of other men's labours in the past. The love of ease breeds pessimism and fatalism. Men will not make the moral effort, which is needed for success, of facing their own inferiority and achieving the delicate adjustments called for by the intricacies of modern social life; they prefer to say that they are the sport of the gods, referring their own failure to the will of the gods:—

“Lo, where they heal, they help not; thus they do,  
They mock us with a little piteousness,  
And we say prayers, and weep; but at the last,  
Sparing awhile, they smite and spare no whit.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Swinburne.

The repercussion of this mental attitude necessarily makes itself felt in present conditions of marriage and parenthood, since men and women whose general attitude towards life is love of ease and avoidance of difficulties will naturally seek for ease and security in their marriage relations and in parenthood. Ease in parenthood is obtained by never facing the real problem of treating children as independent human beings, who are to be regarded with respect and given the understanding to which every human individuality is entitled. The lover of ease will simply look upon his or her children as sources of pleasure and pride to himself or herself.<sup>1</sup> Security in parenthood is gained by keeping the child dependent on the parent, who thus experiences a sense of power at the expense of the child's freedom. It is in this sense that the neurotic child, temperamentally subject to fears and constitutionally disposed to an abnormal psychological development, is likely to have an environment which will increase the tendency to fear and self-distrust.

A bad environment is marked in the first place by the wrong suggestions that are given to the child by the parents. Insecure themselves as to their psychic foundations, the parents will hand on their sense of insecurity to the child. They will suggest to him a universe full of dangers, a hostile God wielding thunders and lightnings, a world peopled

<sup>1</sup> It is this desire of the parent to enjoy the advantages of parenthood without any of the trouble involved in the true parental relationship that is lashed by Oscar Wilde in "A Woman of no Importance."

by bogies of every kind: shades of terror to haunt the child's footsteps throughout life. They will suggest to him appeasement of the gods as the only way of safety and incite him to prayers, beseechings and self-abnegation. Such a child will grow up with fear as the strongest element in his psychology: distrust of himself and fear of a dangerous universe. Secondly, a bad environment means that the parents are those who have no interest in encouraging the child's independence. They wish (unconsciously) to play on his temperamental fears in order to make him dependent on themselves; they have no desire to help him on the only lines on which he might overcome those fears, that is by the constant putting forth of effort to become superior to his own inferiority and by the continual exercise of any gifts or talents which would give him increased self-confidence. For this he needs the approval and appreciation of his elders, which the parents, occupied with their own efforts to obtain security, are unable to give.

The child with the bad environment thus grows up dominated by fear, with a sense of discouragement and a consciousness of being misunderstood. He or she feels that they are not getting what they want out of life. What they need is someone who will help them to overcome the weak element in themselves and will encourage them to reinforce the strong element. They do not want sympathy; they want understanding. Not finding what they need in those who surround them, they deny their instinctive desire for help and for understanding.

So a history of repression begins, which brings us to the second part of the tale of abnormal psychological development.

We cannot understand repression apart from the study of the instinctive tendencies or dispositions. It is by virtue of these innate dispositions, as we have seen, that the individual tends to react to objects in his environment in a perfectly definite way, in correspondence with the place those objects have in relation to his own life purpose. To a child, the parents are the most important objects from this point of view, because they supply the child's needs and (by a love and power which he takes for granted) give him the wherewithal both physical and spiritual to face the exigencies of life. The child naturally looks to the parent for help and support in any emergency and expects, moreover, such assistance to be *regularly* supplied and the necessary approval and encouragement to be given *without fail* by the parent, simply *ex officio*, as the parent's part in life. This expectancy of the child, due to the parent's superior power and capacity, is the instinct of submission, with which he or she naturally reacts in the presence of the elder. But if once a child comes to his parent (or parent substitute) for the necessary help or encouragement and is turned away, such a child will never appeal to the parent with the same spontaneousness again. The pain of the refusal, which means the failure of the instinctive impulse to gain its end, will be burned into the child's memory, and the experience registered in the unconscious will rise into consciousness whenever the

original memory-image of the incident or an associated memory-image becomes present to the mind. The real significance of such a memory lies in the sense of fear and inferiority attaching to it. Since the help which the child expected was withheld, the consequent deduction in the child's unconscious mind is that no dependence can be placed on the most reliable person (parent or parent substitute) in the universe; the child feels that he is left to struggle on alone, so that the weight of loneliness is added to his sense of inferiority. Many incidents of this kind will fill his mind with painful complexes: that is to say, ideas and emotions connected with fear and failure, registered in the unconscious, but always liable to be brought into consciousness when any associated idea shall awake the dormant emotions into activity.

If in a child's early history some important instinctive reaction once fails to gain its end, a bar is interposed between the instinctive emotion and the instinctive impulse. The child, having failed to gain from the parent (or parent substitute) the help that it needed, will not again follow an impulse to ask for help or approval from that person or from any one else associated in its mind with the one who originally failed to supply its need. But since the submissive tendency which leads the child to ask for help and encouragement from his parents and elders is instinctive, expressing that mental attitude in the child which is necessary to him for obtaining the means for his development, it is impossible that the instinct of submission should not be aroused in

the child whenever he is in the presence of those persons who induce in him a feeling of his needs. The memory of failure, however, will conduce, in each case, to prevent the completion of the instinctive process, that is, the passing over of emotion to action. The child will not ask for help or sympathy; but will "repress" the emotion which would normally have given energy to the action. Nevertheless, that same emotion remains a source of energy in the Unconscious. The subsequent harm of the repression will be that the emotion which failed to find expression at the normal time and in the normal way will always be seeking outlet on the infantile level on which it was originally aroused. It is characteristic of a child to seek sympathy from its mother in its small troubles; it is natural for the mother to soothe the child and to take pains to put it at its ease. It is also characteristic of a child, when older, to seek approval and encouragement from its elders in all that it undertakes. But the child in whom these natural desires have been repressed owing to unsympathetic surroundings, whilst remaining outwardly independent and marked perhaps by unsubmitiveness or even hostility towards his elders, is still longing unconsciously for that help that was denied to him. The repressed emotion, which should at the time have found a natural outlet in childish attitudes and childish actions, then becomes in the adult a regressive force, attaching him to the past and incapacitating him for making the new psychological adjustments. Having failed to find its proper object at the time that it was aroused, the emotion

becomes centred round the self in the form of self-pity. Afterwards if a person should be found who as object replaces in the mind of the adult the faulty object of earlier days, the floodgates of his emotion will be opened towards that person and the grown man will seek again for that soothing of his fears, that reassurance towards the universe, that encouragement and that sympathy, the need for which he should have long outgrown.

Repression, therefore, leads to self-occupation and to self-centredness, with a persistence of infantile desires and attitudes. As a form of the self-regarding sentiment, self-pity marks a fundamentally wrong attitude towards the self and also towards the world. This sentiment is diametrically opposed to an independent standard of thought and action, which will enable the individual to trust to the leading of destiny as long as he does his best, faces the demands of life and makes his bid for success. Self-pity is an excuse for shirking the difficulties of life, being a disguised desire for help from other people instead of a healthy self-reliance based on personal effort and the overcoming of difficulties. It results, therefore, in a feeling of resentment and hostility towards the world. The person who is self-centred and self-occupied cannot establish free and friendly relations with the rest of mankind, for he is always thinking of how he can achieve his own aim in life with the least expenditure of effort. There is no free outgoing of the mind in generous thought for other people. Such an individual, therefore, is not equipped to make the adjustments required at those

times when a fresh psychological stage is reached: when there must be of necessity the renewed "dying" to the infantile before there can be the "re-birth" to the new psychic conditions. Self-occupation will prevent the man or woman from being able to open his or her mind freely to those stimuli which would call out all the latent energies which belong to the new psychological stage. The man may actually be a husband and a father, the woman a wife and a mother, and yet neither may have tapped the deeper sources of energy which might be released by the sexual and parental relationships. The fear and self-distrust which led to the original repression in the child, when the instinctive impulse failed to reach its goal, will lead again to repression in the adult when it is time for the individual to leave some more of the props of his infancy behind and to launch out further into unknown psychological paths.

Such failure of adaptation is due to the fact that the individual has wrong standards of value. He wants the approval and help of others to compensate for his feeling of insufficiency and to bolster him up against his temperamental fears, because his faulty training has induced him to think of his own inferiority (physical or mental) as the reason for his failure and the justification of his dependence on others. He has never learned the truth that in the world of psychic conditions there is no such condition as native inferiority; such inferiority as the individual feels being the result of his disinclination to face reality and to win the self-confidence which comes to any man from the consciousness that he has done all that in him lies to ensure success.



We must remember, however, that in such a case as we have been considering, fears and repressions mark only one side of a character which on the other side may be strong and purposeful. In the neurotic, with his (or her) highly sensitive nervous organisation (perhaps easily exhausted because of its high degree of sensitiveness), there may be a rich endowment of artistic and intellectual gifts and, consequently, a strong urge to self-expression. The feeling of inferiority in such a character only enhances the desire for power. As Professor Adler has said, "The guiding line of the neurotic" leads "in a directly perpendicular line upwards."<sup>1</sup> This native force of character may be shown at once if any strong external stimulus presents itself, which will break through the barriers of egotism and arouse the energy which will enable the individual to overcome his fears and hesitations. Called upon in a time of national emergency to take his place in the herd, or suddenly required to assume some unwonted personal responsibility, such an individual will probably rise superior to all his own deficiencies and reveal his native worth and capacity. But if the extra stimulus should disappear from his life, the danger is that the old fears and self-distrust will again invade the psyche, the inner conflict being redoubled when vistas of the true road to power have once been opened up before his eyes.

Nevertheless, it is not impossible for the neurotic finally to shake off the slough of his impeding doubts

<sup>1</sup> *The Neurotic Constitution*, p. 43.

and fears, if his mental constitution have sufficient stamina to support a radical readjustment. Before he can arrive at a condition of harmony it is necessary that he should make a thorough recasting of psychic values. His whole mind, so far, has been occupied with his desire to achieve self-expression, while at the same time the fabric of his mental experience has become shot through with painful memories of fear and failure. Not having had the courage to face his own inferiority, he has found his fear of criticism (which is in reality the fear of his own unfaced inferiority) stand like some terrible enemy in his path, whenever he tried to move forward. His only hope, therefore, is to find some standard or ideal within himself, to which he feels bound to adhere and in the keeping of which he can face the world sure of himself and unafraid of the criticism of others. For this he must drop self-pity and start out on the path of effort, whatever the pain that his hitherto unfaced inferiority may cost him.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps some personal influence may be needed to give him the initial impulse: some suggestion from without which will counteract the effect of the suggestions of his early environment: but once having been given the start and once having tasted the exhilaration which comes from independent action without any "moral support," he will soon gain the needed

<sup>1</sup> To use the interesting symbolism which M. Baudouin has created out of his study and interpretation of the poetry of Emile Verhaeren, he must leave "the garden" (the world of dreams), even if it be a paradise (the Garden of Eden), and accept "the factory" (the world of human action and reality). See Ch. Baudouin, *Psychoanalysis and Aesthetics*, pp. 44, 45.

impetus for progressing along the path to freedom. It is only by launching out boldly and leaving behind all those attachments which keep the mind in bondage to the opinion or approval of others, that any individual, man or woman, can rise to the height of their own creative energy.

The transmutation of values, therefore, has to begin with the ego. The individual must assert himself, he must take a stand of independence against the gods of his own making, clothed with the power of judgment which the individual attributes to deity in order to be relieved from the trouble of making and living up to his own personal standard, before he can shake himself free of all dependencies, staking his future on the ultimate value and importance of the ego. In so doing he asserts his true self over his infantile impulses and attitudes, which, like the snakes in the "Laocoon," would encoil and strangle him. But he is also called upon to make another change of values, by recasting his idea of himself in relation to society. In the past he has pursued his own aims, absorbed in his attempt to achieve adequate self-expression, whilst visiting on the world his own fears and self-distrust in the shape of jealousy and hostility directed towards those more successful than himself. With a new and surer standard of self-confidence he can afford to take a fresh view of his obligations to society. He can re-form his aim in life, so that instead of working entirely for his own success, he can give his talents freely to the world. In expressing himself in a way that conduces to the good and happiness of others he finds a new motive,

one which will call out all his latent energies and which will raise the value of all his psychic experiences. His ideal will provide the stimulus by which the energy may be released from within, whilst his mind will be open to all the stimuli which can act upon him from without. Forgetting himself, he will achieve the harmony of all his powers. The energy which in the neurotic is released from conflict, that surplus of energy called up to fight the infantile fears and dreads, may sometimes be of surprising power and strength; but the energy which is the outcome of happiness, which results from the radiation of all the forces of the mind working in harmony, has a higher power of creation. Although the path to self-knowledge and freedom may be a long and difficult one for the person of neurotic constitution, yet it is not impossible for any individual with sufficient courage and perseverance to solve his or her problem on the level of happiness.

## CHAPTER IX

### ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

#### 2. THE FLIGHT FROM REALITY

IN the type of neurotic character which we were considering in the last chapter, we noticed that the chief feature was a profound disharmony in the ego. We saw how, on the one hand, there were temperamental fears (related to some physical inferiority) and a constitutional mental laziness (related, again, on the physical side, to an easily exhausted nervous system): while, on the other, there was a strong power urge corresponding to mental gifts and endowments which the individual had an urgent longing to express. The man or woman of this type of character is most commonly one whose mental processes are elaborated on the intellectual side. Such a character is also connected with a tendency to introversion: that is, it is generally found in an individual whose mental habit is to relate all experience to the ego. Such a person, although of the intellectual type, will tend to over-react emotionally towards any objects which stimulate "self-feeling" in him, whether positive or negative. He does not remain in a simple, objective attitude towards external objects, because all his relationships with them are modified by his self-consciousness. His fears and repressions are caused by his unconscious desire for

psychic dependence, conflicting with an egoistic pride: the result being that he neither has confidence in himself nor in other people. In such a case the environment is bound to furnish persons who will play on the individual's temperamental fears in order to compensate for the inferiority they feel towards him in other respects, an inferiority they resent because of his own attitude of pride and superiority.

Against this type of person, so prone to abnormal psychological development, we have now to contrast another type, whose attitude towards life is in many ways profoundly different. We must surmise, again, a certain degree of inferiority, making for psychic dependence. Probably in this type of individual the intellectual inferiority will be more marked than the physical. We must imagine also, to make the second type complete, an early environment tending to increase the disinclination to effort by teaching and training which put a wrong interpretation on the facts of experience: inducing that attitude towards life by which the individual expects to win advantages without any expenditure of effort and without risk to ease or safety.

Apart from these general likenesses in heredity and environment, our second type varies from the first very markedly in the quality of the mental equipment. The type of individual whom we are now considering has not that cleavage in the ego which belongs to the essentially neurotic character. His mental processes are not elaborated on the intellectual side and there is not the same strong urge

to self-expression. He may have considerable practical intelligence, however, and often possesses a marked physical superiority in the form of muscular strength. He has a tendency, therefore, to dominate others, partly from a sense of physical power and partly from a consciousness of intellectual inferiority. Such an individual belongs to the extravert type of mental constitution, standing in a simpler relation to external objects than is possible for the neurotic with his eternal self-questioning. He remains, therefore, in a direct emotional relationship with the external world, judging objects for what they are in themselves rather than for the nature of the self-feeling which they induce in him.

The reactions of such a man or woman to the external environment will be fundamentally different from those displayed by the first type. In both cases there is a psychic inferiority making for dependence; but in the first case there was a strong reaction against the inferiority, which readily turned the dependent attitude into one of pride and outward reserve. This attitude awakened hostility in those who surrounded the child and made them assert their own superiority by playing on the child's temperamental fears. In the second case, the child, not having such a strong power urge, is not likely to experience or to awaken the same jealousy and hostility in his relations with his external world. In fact, he will probably arouse a strongly protective feeling in those on whom he is dependent. His trend of thought and feeling being far more concrete than that of the neurotic, he will pass under the

sway of persons in his environment without any of the inner conflict which takes place in the mind of the more subtle type. He will not have the generalised fear of the neurotic (who senses beforehand the situation which will wound his self-feeling), but he will be subject to "phobias," that is, fears of concrete objects, which represent for him those facts of life which he has never truly faced. If in some critical moment of his career he takes the lower course of action, as suggested to him by those persons under whose influence his mind is bound, he may develop a "pan-phobia," or fear of all things, a fear, that is, of life itself.

We may take, as likely to furnish a good example of this second type of abnormal psychological development, the case of the youngest son in a family, who, being of inferior mentality to his elder brothers and sisters, is specially favoured by his mother. She protects and makes much of him in relation to the other members of the family, so that the child finds an easy road to power through her protection. A close attachment is formed between the boy and his mother, which gives him a sense of undue importance owing to his association with his parent. The mother bestows her favours quite apart from any effort made by the child, enjoying the sense of power which she obtains from his dependence on her. She shields him from the roughnesses of reality, that is, from the demands of the social environment, which on the whole meets out rewards to those who have done something to deserve them, and takes his side against those who would make him



adjust to the claims of social life. The child thus grows up with a phantasy of greatness; this phantasy, like a thin, impalpable wall, always interposing itself between the child (and afterwards the adult) and the demands of reality.

This psychological dependence on the mother as the giver of ease and comfort, the protector and saviour from the hard realities of life, effectually prevents the right adjustments being made by the individual when he arrives at a period of greater responsibility. His attachment to his mother and his dependence on the maintenance of this relationship for preserving his phantasy of greatness keep him back in the infantile stage of psychological development. When the call to responsibility comes, therefore, he cannot answer it. He has no motive to show himself worthy of the higher, more responsible parts in life, because he can enjoy a sense of power through his association with his mother. Throughout life he continues to look for someone who will still bear to him the maternal aspect and relationship.

We are familiar with this psychological situation through the story of *Œdipus*, the famous king of Greek legend and drama. *Œdipus* was the son of *Laïus* and *Jocasta*, King and Queen of *Thebes*. He was cast out to die by his parents on account of an oracle which foretold the death of *Laïus* by the hand of his son, but was rescued by a shepherd and taken to the court of the King and Queen of *Corinth*, who brought him up as their own child. He was told by an oracle that he would kill his father and

marry his mother. To avoid this danger he left the court of his supposed parents and in the course of his wanderings met his real father, Laius. A fray ensued between the two, in which Œdipus unsuspectingly killed his father. He then came to Thebes, where he read the riddle of the Sphinx, who was taking a death toll of the inhabitants, delivered the city and as a reward received the throne of Thebes together with the hand of Jocasta. He thus unknowingly married his mother and in her right ruled over Thebes. Afterwards, a pestilence fell upon Thebes, sent by Apollo on account of the unavenged murder of Laius. When Tiresias, the blind seer, accused Œdipus of the murder, Œdipus at first repudiated all knowledge of the crime, but the result of a train of enquiries was to bring the truth home to him and to show that Œdipus had not only slain Laius, but that in so doing he had killed his father. The truth then burst upon him that he had married his mother. In his passion he would have slain Jocasta, but found that she was already dead, having hanged herself on learning the truth of her unhappy marriage. Œdipus thereupon seized a pin from her dress, with which he stabbed at his eyeballs and blinded himself. Self-exiled, he left the city of Thebes in fulfilment of the curse which he himself had pronounced against the murderer of Laius.

Some illustrations taken from the play of Sophocles (*Œdipus Tyrannus*) will make clear the psychological points of the story. In the play, Œdipus, before he knows the truth about his parentage, pictures

himself to his wife Jocasta as afraid of his supposed mother, the Queen of Corinth, whom he imagines he is destined to marry. This fear of the mother is the psychological equivalent of a desire to be dependent upon the mother. On hearing of the death of the King of Corinth, whom, again, according to the oracle, Œdipus thinks himself destined to kill, Œdipus exclaims:—

“When then, my queen, should anyone regard the prophetic hearth of Pytho, or the birds that scream above our heads, under whose predestination I was fated to slay my own father? But he is dead and buried deep down in earth, while I here before you am guiltless of handling weapon against him.”

Jocasta then tries to persuade him that since the oracle has not come true in the case of his father, (she sharing in the delusion with Œdipus that the King and Queen of Corinth are his parents), there is no need for him to have any fear as regards his mother. Jocasta says:—

“Did I not now forewarn thee of this long ago?”

ŒDIPUS

“Thou didst say it; but I was led away by my fear.”

Again Jocasta counsels him:—

“But have thou no fear of the bridal alliance with thy mother; for many among mankind have ere now, and that in dreams, done incest with a mother; but to whomsoever this reckons as nothing, he bears his life easiest.”

ŒDIPUS

“Fairly had all this been stated by thee, had my mother happened not to have been alive; but now, since she does live, there is positive necessity, even though thou sayest fairly, for me to recoil.”

JOCASTA

"And yet the burial of thy father at least throws a great light on this."

ŒDIPUS

"Great, I admit; but I have dread of the surviving woman."

It is not, of course, the actual mother that Œdipus fears. It is the image set up in his own mind, to which he is enslaved by his own wish to be dependent on the protecting power and which he fears as if the danger were from outside, when it is really from within. This attitude towards the mother (who actually in the story is the "phantasy mother") is clearly expressed in the words in which he tells of the attraction which Corinth holds for him:—

"For Apollo foretold once that it was my destiny to be my own mother's paramour, and with my own hands to shed my father's blood. For which cause has Corinth, this long while, been dwelt far away from by me, prosperously indeed; but still it is most sweet to behold the faces of one's parents."

The play shows how Œdipus, when on his way, as it proved, to Thebes, where he was to marry his mother, met his father Laius. This meeting took place at the crossroads. Œdipus, afterwards describing the meeting, says:—

"When I, wending my way was close upon this triple road, there did both a herald, and a man mounted on a chariot with young steeds, even as thou describest, meet me; and both the guide and the old man himself were for driving me by force off the road."

Laius, who would have turned Œdipus from the path which was leading him to marriage with the

mother, represents psychologically the "reality principle," since it was through Laius, his real father, that Œdipus was rightly entitled to the kingdom of Thebes. When, however, Laius opposed him in the path which unconsciously he was bent on pursuing, the path which would lead him to his phantasy greatness, Œdipus slew his father. In so doing, in failing to face reality, he put himself at the mercy of fate, instead of mastering it. When in the play he discovers his crime, he puts it down to the machinations of a devil:—

"And would not any one, pronouncing all this to be the work of a ruthless dæmon upon me, be right in his words? Then O may I never, may I never, thou spotless majesty of heaven, see this day, but may I be gone from among mankind into darkness ere that I view such a taint of misery come upon me."

Driven from one phantasy, Œdipus passes to another. He discovers himself to have been only the adopted child of the King and Queen of Corinth, who had received him at the hands of a herdsman. He thereupon creates a new phantasy of greatness conferred on him through his birth and parentage:—

"But I, ranking myself the child of that Chance which gives me her blessing, shall not feel dishonoured. For of her, as of a mother, was I born, and the congenial months ordained me humble and exalted. But being born such, I could never turn out to be another, that I should not search out my pedigree."<sup>1</sup>

As the result of the "search," the full story comes

<sup>1</sup> There is a certain grandeur about Œdipus, a cosmic element in his character, which one cannot but admire, in spite of the inherent weakness shown in his attitude towards life.

out, but Œdipus still refuses to face reality. He puts his misfortune down to the gods:—

“Bear me away from the place with all speed, bear me away, my friends . . . , the most accursed, and most god-detested of human kind.”

He blinds himself so that he may not behold the faces of those who have suffered through his deeds.

“For I know not with what manner of eyes beholding, I could have looked my father in the face when I went down to Hades, no, nor my hapless mother, to both of whom deeds have been done by me that hanging is too good for. But forsooth the sight of my children was to be coveted by me to see, springing forth as they sprung. No, to my eyes never . . . . Could I, who had exposed such a blot in my own person, ever look on these with steadfast eyes? No, never, surely! Nay, had there been yet means of stoppage of the fountain of hearing through my ears, I would not have refrained from blocking up my miserable body, that I might have been both sightless and devoid of hearing: for to have one’s feelings abiding beyond reach of one’s misfortunes were sweet.”

Such a desire is characterised by C. G. Jung as “a deep personal longing for quiet and for the profound peace of non-existence, for a dreamless sleep in the ebb and flow of the sea of life.” Man, he says, “even in his highest endeavours for harmony and equilibrium, for philosophic depths and artistic enthusiasm,” “seeks death, immobility, satiety and rest.” If he “tarries too long” in the “place of rest and peace,” “he is overcome by torpidity, and the poison of the serpent paralyses him for all time.”<sup>1</sup> Œdipus, ignoring all his responsibilities, turns his

<sup>1</sup> Dr. C. G. Jung, *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1922), pp. 215.

back on the city which had looked to him as its saviour:—

“But me, never let this, the city of my fathers, deign to admit a living inhabitant; no, suffer me to abide in the mountains, where is that very Cithæron surnamed mine, which both my father and mother allotted to me yet living as my proper tomb.”<sup>1</sup>

In the deeps of Cithæron no difficult social adjustments had to be made. Escape to the “wilderness” typifies the final flight from reality. Another play of Sophocles (*Œdipus Coloneus*) shows *Œdipus*, old and blind, led about by his daughter, without a home, but still clinging to his phantasy of power.

Another very interesting example of the fatal attachment to the mother is to be found in Swinburne's tragedy, “*Atalanta in Calydon*.”<sup>2</sup> This poem represents the fateful history of *Meleager*, son of *Althæa*, Queen of *Calydon*. At the birth of *Meleager*, three things were prophesied of him by the Fates: that he should have great strength of his hands, that he should have good fortune in this life and that he should live no longer when the brand then in the fire was consumed. *Althæa*, his mother, thereupon plucked the brand out of the fire and kept it by her. Here at once we have the idea of the complete power of life and death over a human being possessed by “the mother” (that is, by the image of power, the psychological equivalent of the parent, which the individual sets up in his mind,

<sup>1</sup> My quotations are taken from *The Oxford Translation of the Tragedies of Sophocles* (Bohn's Classical Library), 1849.

<sup>2</sup> *Atalanta in Calydon*, vol. II of Swinburne's *Collected Works* (William Heinemann Ltd.), 1924.

which he fears and worships and which becomes for him a protecting shield between himself and reality). Meleager grows to manhood, sails with Jason after the fleece of gold, and becomes a famous warrior. The goddess Artemis, however, not having been sufficiently honoured by the King of Calydon, Meleager's father, sends a wild boar which wastes and destroys the land of Calydon. The chief men of Greece gather together to make war on this boar and with them comes to Calydon Atalanta, daughter of Iasius the Arcadian, a virgin. For her sake, Artemis, the virgin goddess, allows the boar to be slain. Meleager, who has conceived the deepest admiration for the maiden, gives to her the spoils of the chase, but in so doing awakens the hostility of his uncles Toxeus and Plexippus, brothers of his mother. These laid wait to seize the spoil from Atalanta and to dishonour her: whereupon Meleager slays his uncles. Althæa, on hearing that her brothers have been slain by her son, becomes mad with wrath and sorrow; she takes the brand which measures her son's life and casts it upon the fire. As the brand wastes, the life of Meleager wastes also; he is brought home to his father's house, where after a brief space he dies. His mother also dies shortly afterwards for sorrow.

The relationship of mother and son is shown clearly in the tragedy in the scene which takes place between them before Meleager sets out to join in the hunting of the boar. The exclusive nature of Althæa's love makes her psychically dependent on her son (illustrating the fact that the parent who



tends to keep her child dependent on herself is actually depending on the child for her own sense of power):—

“Mine eyes wax thick,  
Turning toward thee, so goodly a weaponed man,  
So glorious; and for love of thine own eyes  
They are darkened, and tears burn them, fierce as fire,  
And my lips pause and my soul sinks with love.  
But by thine hand, by thy sweet life and eyes,  
By thy great heart and these clasped knees, O son,  
I pray thee that thou slay me not with thee.  
For there was never a mother woman-born  
Loved her sons better; and never a queen of men  
More perfect in her heart toward whom she loved.”

To attach him more firmly to herself she reminds him of the time when he was physically dependent on her:—

“I have seen thee all thine years  
A man in arms, strong and a joy to men  
Seeing thine head glitter and thine hand burn its way  
Through a heavy and iron furrow of sundering spears;  
But always also a flower of three suns old,  
The small one thing that lying drew down my life  
To lie with thee and feed thee; a child and weak,  
Mine, a delight to no man, sweet to me.”

Meleager's answer shows his fatal longing for dependence:—

“Queen, my whole heart is molten with thy tears,  
And my limbs yearn with pity of thee, and love  
Compels with grief mine eyes and labouring breath;  
For what thou art I know thee, and this thy breast  
And thy fair eyes I worship, and am bound  
Toward thee in spirit and love thee in all my soul.  
For there is nothing terribler to men  
Than the sweet face of mothers, and the might.”

This dependent attitude towards the mother carries with it an equally servile spirit towards the gods and towards fate. Althæa admonishes her son:—

“Fear thou the gods and me and thine own heart,  
Lest all these turn against thee; for who knows  
What wind upon what wave of altering time  
Shall speak a storm and blow calamity?  
And there is nothing stable in the world  
But the gods break it.”

Meleager responds with the same view of fate:—

“For us the day  
Once only lives a little, and is not found.  
Time and the fruitful hour are more than we,  
And these lay hold upon us; but thou, God,  
Zeus, the sole steersman of the helm of things,  
Father, be swift to see us, and as thou wilt  
Help: or if adverse, as thou wilt, refrain.”

In the play it is the coming of Atalanta that brings matters to a crisis. The mother who keeps her son back in the paths of dependence and safety naturally resents the intrusion of anyone into her son's life who will take away his allegiance from her. Her anger first is vented against the goddess Artemis, who after having sent the wild boar to harry the land has now sent Atalanta as a disturbing element into Calydon.

#### ALTHÆA

“Yea, but a curse she hath sent above all these  
To hurt us where she healed us; and hath lit  
Fire where the old fire went out, and where the wind  
Slackened, hath blown on us with deadlier air.

#### CHORUS

What storm is this that tightens all our sail?

ALTHÆA

Love, a thwart sea-wind full of rain and foam.

CHORUS

Whence blown, and born under what stormier star?

ALTHÆA

Southward across Euenus from the sea.

CHORUS

Thy speech turns towards Arcadia like blown wind.

ALTHÆA

Sharp as the north sets when the snows are out.

CHORUS

Nay, for this maiden hath no touch of love.

ALTHÆA

I would she had sought in some cold gulf of sea  
Love, or in dens where strange beasts lurk, or fire,  
Or snows on the extreme hills, or iron land  
Where no spring is; I would she had sought therein  
And found, or ever love had found her here."

Then to her son:—

"And there be nothing stabile in the world  
But the gods break it; yet not less, fair son,  
If but one thing be stronger, if one endure,  
Surely the bitter and the rooted love  
That burns between us, going from me to thee,  
Shall more endure than all things. What dost thou,  
Following strange loves? Why wilt thou kill my  
heart?"

She says again:

"I will go arm my son and bring him forth  
Lest love or some man's anger work him harm."

To Meleager himself Atalanta presents a new and powerful stimulus to the accomplishment of great deeds and the winning of success. He feels the

attraction of this "maiden rose" of all Diana's maids:—

"Arcadian Atalanta, snowy souled,  
Fair as the snow and footed as the wind."

He tells Althæa that in all his wanderings, when he with his companions won the golden fleece "and won Medea, deadlier than the sea":—

"Seeing many a wonder and fearful things to men  
I saw not one thing like this one seen here."

Yet Atalanta does not arouse love in him, but rather fear:—

"Most fair and fearful, feminine, a god,  
Faultless; whom I that love not, being unlike,  
Fear, and give honour, and choose from all the gods."

Love is too perilous a venture for one whose soul is bound up in his attachment to his mother. He is afraid of love for what the consequences may be; he justifies his own cowardice by conjuring up a vision of the difficulties and dangers which beset the path of those who follow the inspiration of love: (In the words of the chorus who voice his feelings):—

"For bitter thou wast from thy birth,  
Aphrodite, a mother of strife;  
For before thee some rest was on earth,  
A little respite from tears,  
A little pleasure of life;

. . . . .  
What hadst thou to do amongst these,  
Thou, clothed with a burning fire,  
Thou, girt with sorrow of heart,  
Thou, sprung of the seed of the seas  
As an ear from a seed of corn,  
As a brand plucked forth of a pyre,

As a ray shed forth of the morn,  
For division of soul and disease,  
For a dart and a sting and a thorn?  
What ailed thee then to be born?"

His desire is thus kept in leash by his fears. Unable to feel any passion of love himself he is unable to awaken any love in Atalanta. She prefers the wild life of the mountains and the forests:—

"Far off from flowers or any bed of man,  
Shall my life be for ever: me the snows  
That face the first o' the morning, and cold hills  
Full of the land-wind and sea-travelling storms  
And many a wandering wing of noisy nights  
That know the thunder and hear the thickening  
wolves—

Me the utmost pine and footless frost of woods  
That talk with many winds and gods, the hours  
Re-risen, and white divisions of the dawn,  
Springs thousand-tongued with the intermitting reed  
And streams that murmur of the mother snow—  
Me these allure, and know me; but no man  
Knows, and my goddess only."

Like Meleager, Atalanta conceives of life as controlled by the will of the gods. In the final death scene, before she finally passes out of the life of Meleager, she speaks sad words of regret:—

"I would that with feet  
Unsandalled, unshod,  
Overbold, overfleet,  
I had swum not, nor trod  
From Arcadia to Calydon northward, a blast of the  
envy of God."

To the end, Meleager clings to his phantasy of greatness through his mother. She has become for

him the "bitter mother and mother plague," but he beseeches her:—

"Thou alone  
Mother, thou sole and only, thou not these,  
Keep me in mind a little when I die  
Because I was thy firstborn; let thy soul  
Pity me, pity even me gone hence and dead."

He recognises, however, that there is some factor responsible for his death besides the power of the mother to "make" and "unmake" him:—

"I would thou hadst let me live; but gods averse,  
But fortune, and the fiery feet of change,  
And time, these would not, these tread out my life,  
These and not thou; me too thou hast loved, and I  
Thee; but this death was mixed with all my life,  
Mine end with my beginning: and this law,  
This only, slays me, and not my mother at all."

This death, this law, was in reality his own desire for dependence, which had put him at the mercy of his mother and prevented him from becoming master of his fate. Once more he addresses his mother:—

"O mother, O breasts that bare me, for ye know,  
O sweet head of my mother, sacred eyes,  
Ye know my soul albeit I sinned, ye know  
Albeit I kneel not neither touch thy knees,  
But with my lips I kneel, and with my heart  
I fall about thy feet and worship thee."

Here again is the infantile phantasy, the "hindering longing" for the mother. Meleager has killed his mother's brethren, who perhaps signify the outward obstacles in the path of sexual love, but, unlike Orestes (of another Greek legend), he is unable to

kill his mother. He is enslaved to the mother-image, the retrogressive longing, and when the crucial moment of his history comes, he is unable to rise to his destiny, and makes the final flight from reality by way of death.

Althæa in the play is an impressive figure, outwardly strong, in contrast to Meleager's weakness. She conceives of herself as equal with the gods in her power to create and then to unmake. But she fails to manifest the higher creative energy which would have called out in her son the adult, independent personality.

In the case of a woman whose infantile phantasy of power preserves her from contact with reality, the psychic dependence is usually in relation to the father. In fact, the psychological case is not complete, unless the phantasy image is developed in connection with the parent of opposite sex. For there must in the phantasy be sufficient satisfaction of sexual desire to enable the phantasy image to hold its own in place of the legitimate sexual object. Such a satisfaction is a substitute one, appealing only to the pleasure principle or the principle of self-indulgence in the individual, but it often wears enough semblance of a true satisfaction of sexual desire to serve to keep the phantasy unbroken, when an attachment is transferred from a mother or father to a wife or husband (as the case may be), who will fill the same place in the life of the man or woman. Such a relationship, however, will never call out those higher qualities of mind and character which are displayed by any man or woman under

the stimulus of a true sexual attraction, for it is psychologically impossible for the libido (or sexual energy) to be fully released in response to an external stimulus until it has been set free from within by the breaking of the attachment to the parent image. In the words of Jung,<sup>1</sup> there must be "the release of the libido from the mother-*imago*"; since "only in this manner is it possible to gain one's libido, the incomparable treasure, and this requires a mighty struggle, the whole battle of adaptation."

Although the greatest danger for the individual lies in the attachment to that image in the mind which corresponds to the parent of opposite sex, we cannot tie down the problem of psychological freedom to the question of release from the "parent-*imago*" only. There may be other images to which the individual bows down, which he worships and with which he identifies himself. All these influences which belong to the infantile period of life must go. "All the libido" to quote Jung again,<sup>2</sup> "unconsciously bound up in familial bonds must be brought outside into human contact. For it is necessary for the well-being of the adult individual, who in his childhood was merely an atom revolving in a rotary system, to become himself the centre of a new system." There must be the sacrificing of the "infantile hero," which is only accomplished "through a complete devotion to life."

The woman's side of the psychological problem is usually illustrated by the story of Electra. The

<sup>1</sup> Dr. C. G. Jung, *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1922), p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.



"Electra complex" in the woman is supposed to correspond to the "Œdipus complex" in the man. Electra was the daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, King and Queen of Argos and Mycenæ. When Agamemnon, father of Electra, returned to Greece at the end of the Trojan War, he was murdered by his wife Clytemnestra, who then ruled the kingdom with her lover Ægisthus. Orestes, son of Agamemnon, was carried away into safety by an old retainer of his father's; Electra remained at the court of Argos to endure neglect and insult at the hands of her mother Clytemnestra and of the usurping Ægisthus. Orestes, having grown to manhood, returned in disguise to the court of Argos, and, urged on by Electra, slew his mother Clytemnestra to avenge the death of his father. This story, however, does not carry out so closely the idea of the fatal attachment to the parent as does the story of Œdipus. If we take the "Electra" of Euripides, we see, certainly, that Electra incites Orestes to the murder of Clytemnestra, just as Œdipus is guilty of the murder of his father. Electra's ideas of greatness and power, moreover, are bound up with the image of her father, just as Œdipus marries his mother and reigns in her right. But in the story, as presented by the Greek poet, the murder of Clytemnestra by Electra and Orestes is not regarded with the same horror as the murder by Œdipus of his father. It is rather the necessary preliminary for the restoration of the children to the rights of their father, a duty laid on them by Apollo. Nor does Electra's attachment to her

father stand between her and the enjoyment of freedom or the possibilities of married love. When her revenge on Clytemnestra has been carried out, the chance of a free and happy life is opened up to her, and the sequel of the story is her marriage with Pylades, the faithful friend of Orestes. Rather, the psychological meaning of this story seems to be the necessity for the woman as well as for the man of achieving freedom from the "hindering longing" for the mother, which means for the woman, as well as the man, the desire for sympathy and understanding. This desire may become retrogressive in character, if over-indulged, and may call for a radical act of renunciation, which can only be described as "killing the mother." The act is, however, easier for Electra than it is for Orestes, just because there is no sexual motive to make the entanglement more complete. It is Electra who incites Orestes to the act. It is Orestes who after the murder is pursued by the Furies. The sacrifice of the infantile personality entails the direst consequences for the individual (and apparently also the highest possibilities of future development) when the retrogressive longing has as its object the parent of opposite sex.

It is interesting to observe in the Greek story that the stimulus that drives Orestes and Electra to the fateful act is their attachment to one another, with their common desire to avenge their father's memory and remove the stain from his house. In Greek drama the relationship between brother and sister is painted as a very intimate one, calling out all the tenderest and deepest feelings of the human mind.

The family bond is presented in its highest significance as a spur to action and a motive for the daring of fate. By brave deeds the individual enhances the glory of his house. Of "love interest" in the ordinary sense little use is made by Greek poets as a motive. They were concerned rather with the problem which is the preliminary of the problem of love and marriage: the problem whether man is to be the master of his fate or whether he is to be at the mercy of chance and accident, a sport for gods, defenceless against disaster. We can see underlying the superficial events of Greek drama the same recurring theme: the grandeur of the man or woman who faces reality, who, shedding the protective phantasy which softens the facts of life, stands up with undaunted spirit against ill or accident. Even under such circumstances of life as render the individual outwardly helpless, as in the case of the "Trojan Women" taken captive by the Greeks after the Trojan War, we can see in the Greek poetical presentation how the mind which accepts and bows to the inevitable is still master of the situation. Amidst the lamentations of the Trojan women in the play of Euripides,<sup>1</sup> when the captives are shortly to be carried off to Greece as the spoil of their victors, we cannot but admire the fine words of Hecuba, Queen of Troy, on whom misfortune had laid the heaviest hand:—

"Had not the god caught us in his grip and plunged us headlong 'neath the earth, we should have been unheard of, nor ever sung in Muses' songs, furnishing to bards of after-days a subject for their minstrelsy."

<sup>1</sup> *The Troades of Euripides* (transl. Edward P. Coleridge), 1908.

When in the life of any individual the "flight from reality" has begun in early childhood, there must be some powerful stimulus, some great awakening to responsibility before the flight can be arrested. Such a stimulus comes in different forms to different persons. There must, however, be some call from outside, which will break through the protecting phantasy in which the individual has wrapped himself and which will give him a motive for effort and achievement. To take one more example from literature: this time an example all the more interesting as it comes from the drama of a modern poet, who in it has cast the longings which we of this time feel towards an attitude of independence and assertion of our individuality: we shall find in the story of Nimrod, from John Redwood Anderson's dramatic poem "Babel," the case of a man who suddenly turns round to face reality, after having lived a life of phantasy and unreality. Nimrod is king of Babylon. The city is overwhelmed with floods which threaten starvation and utter ruin to the inhabitants. These calamities are attributed by the High Priest to Nimrod's disregard of the gods. Nimrod remains in his palace, leaving his citizens to cope with misfortune and terror of death. Suddenly Nimrod has an inspiration, which, by giving him an object to work for which will at once embody his own power urge and be of service to the inhabitants, enables him to free himself from his phantasy and to stand face to face with reality:—

"I have it, Manishtusu! Neither by drowning  
Shall this bright jewel on the breast of Shinar

Be dashed out of being. Something at least  
Of all its splendour shall survive these days,  
And life's tradition shall go down to time  
Proud with the golden titles of the past  
Inscribed in it. For I will build a tower  
That shall stand up and laugh at all these threats,  
And like an island of strong haughty life  
Dominate death's tides. Send heralds out  
To assemble the people in the market-square,  
I will go down and lay my purpose open  
And with some reason bid them hope. I feel  
Like one some throttling nightmare has let go,  
And who in robust action grasps his soul  
Saved from the slide of idleness going  
To some abrupt abyss.

. . . . .

From that gloom,  
My spirit turned inward on itself had made,  
I again come forth, and through these fogs of dreaming  
The world of man's reality stands out  
Before me and I live as other men.  
I seem as one who has been long asleep  
And wakes to find it morning—though that morning  
Is a huge menace of encumbered cloud  
Robbed of dawn's birthright! Still, it is the day  
When a man acts—the soul's anchor against  
The treacherous and strong tides of the night.  
Babylon shall be saved and I will save it,  
And, saving it, rescue my living soul  
From thought's too sure paralysis. My tower,  
That shall lift Nimrod level with the Gods!"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. Redwood Anderson, *Bebel, a Dramatic Poem*, pp. 48, 49  
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